

# THE CHRISTIAN REVIEW.

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## ARTICLE I.

[We have been favored by Mr. David Fosdick, Jr., with the following extract, translated from a recent German work of Professor Olshausen, on the Genuineness of the Books of the New Testament. This work, Mr. Fosdick is now engaged in translating and preparing for the press. We prefix a brief notice of Olshausen, for which we are indebted to a friend:

“Dr. Hermann Olshausen (not to be confounded with his brother, the orientalist, Justus Olshausen, professor in the university of Kiel) was born in 1796, at Oldesloe, between Hamburg and Lubeck, in Holstein. His father, who was a dignitary of the church, gave him a careful education. After preparing for the university, mostly at the gymnasium of Gluckstadt, near the mouth of the Elbe, he entered the university of Kiel, in the 19th year of his age. After two years, he removed from the university of his native State to that of the Prussian capital, where the character of his scholarship and his religious views took their peculiar stamp. Professor Tholuck, then a fellow-student at Berlin, was the instrument of his conversion. They were intimate friends, and held nearly an equal rank as scholars. Tholuck, in the mean time, during his intercourse with the venerable Baron Von

Kottewitz, laid aside his skepticism, and became a decided Christian. Professor Olshausen, in a familiar interview with him, attempted to reason him out of his new religious views. 'Tholuck,' said he, 'if it were not for your foolish Moravian notions, you might obtain one of the first professorships in Germany. But as it is, you can never rise to any high station.' Tholuck replied, 'Did you ever read the books of these Moravians?' 'No,' was the answer. 'Let me tell you, then,' continued he, 'that, with all your talent and theological learning, you will never get to heaven, without that which these Moravians have, and which you have not.' They parted with mutual sorrow. Professor Tholuck now seriously feared, that a long-cherished friendship was broken up. They did not see each other again for a week, when the solicitude of this pious youth induced him to visit his friend in his own room; and what were his emotions, when he found Mr. Olshausen seated by a table covered with Moravian books, and in great distress of mind! After much kind counsel and prayer with him, that faithful Christian had the pleasure of seeing his friend a convert to experimental religion.

"It is thought, that, while Neander, Schleiermacher and De Wette exerted an influence on Olshausen's mind, that of Neander was the most decisive in its effects. He devoted himself chiefly to the study of the New Testament; and it is in this department of theology that he has most distinguished himself. The leading object of his labors has been, to displace the cold, heartless criticism of such men as Paullus, Kuinöl, Rosenmüller, Koppe and Wegscheider,—who neglect all the weightier matters of the law, and have little sympathy with the spirit of the New Testament writers,—and to substitute a spiritual interpretation, which should elicit the beauties and excellences of the abused book of God. He is a spiritualist or idealist, in opposition to the low rationalists; and a speculative theologian, nearly like Neander, and between Lücke and Tholuck, in contradistinction to the empirical orthodox divines. His philology is of the later school of Winer and Lücke, though less severe; and his hermeneu-



tical principles, leading him to search after a deeper spiritual sense, differ considerably from those of Ernesti. His occasional writings on a 'deeper sense' of scriptural language, and his commentary on the historical books of the New Testament, show him to agree nearly with Lücke, in his youthful work on interpretation. The truth evidently lies between him and his opponents.

"In 1818, he became theological Repetent at Berlin, and in 1822, professor of theology at Königsberg, where he wrote and published most of his works. In 1835, he was called to a more agreeable situation, as professor at Erlangen. Like all of the 'speculative pietists' of the present day, in Germany, he has met with *gross* opposition. Every body knows what insults were offered to Tholuck, at first, in Halle, and to Hahn, on his removal to Breslau. While Olshausen's work on the Gospels and the Acts had a wider circulation than any similar work in Germany, his friends could not even get a miniature likeness of him engraved in his own city (Königsberg), such was the prejudice against him by the rationalists there; and it was necessary to send to Berlin, to get an artist of moral courage enough to undertake it.

"Most of his works have been already mentioned. The little popular work, on the Genuineness of the Books of the New Testament, is one of his best productions. His commentary is very attractive, full of ingenuity and learning, often exceedingly happy, but sometimes fanciful."]

#### OF THE REVELATION OF JOHN.

The sublime book which concludes the New Testament, the Revelation of St. John (*ὁ θεολόγος*), with its wonderful images and visions, has met with a more extraordinary fate than any other writing of the New Testament. The impressive and absorbing nature of the contents of the book has seldom permitted any one to examine it with cool impartiality; and while some have become the enthusiastic advocates of the book, others have appeared as its most violent opponents, not only rejecting the production as not apostolical, or as forged, but even reviling it as the production of an heretical spirit.

Thus it has happened, that while no production of the New Testament can exhibit more and stronger historical evidence of its genuineness and apostolic authority than the Revelation, none has met with more antagonists ; and, indeed, many of its antagonists are men who have merited much gratitude from the church for their struggles in behalf of the truth. Among these is Luther, who shows himself a determined opponent of John's Revelation. He says, in his Preface to it :

"There are various and abundant reasons why I regard this book as neither apostolical nor prophetic. First and foremost, the apostles do not make use of visions, but prophesy in clear and plain language, as do Peter, Paul, and Christ, also, in the gospel ; for it is becoming the apostolic office to speak plainly, and without figure or vision, respecting Christ and his acts. Moreover, it seems to me far too arrogant, for him to enjoin it upon his readers to regard this, his own work, as of more importance than any other sacred book, and to threaten, that if any one shall take aught away from it, God will take away from him his part in the book of life. (Rev. 22: 19.) Besides, even were it a blessed thing to believe what is contained in it, no man knows what that is. The book is believed (and is really just the same to us) as though we had it not ; and many more valuable books exist for us to believe in. But let every man think of it as his spirit prompts him. My spirit cannot adapt itself to the production ; and this is reason enough for me, why I should not esteem it very highly."

From this strong language of the great reformer, it is sufficiently evident how repulsive the contents of the Revelation were to him. As he termed the epistle of James a *strawy* epistle, because it seemed to him to contradict Paul's doctrine in regard to faith, so he rejected the Revelation, because the imagery of the book was unintelligible to him. This was obscure to him, from the fact, that he could not thoroughly apprehend the doctrine of God's kingdom upon earth, which is exhibited in the Revelation, and forms the proper centre of every thing contained in it.

The same point has, at all times, in the church, operated very powerfully upon the judgments of learned men, in regard to the Revelation ; and therefore we must, before any particular examination of this production, make some general observations on the propriety of permitting doctrinal views generally, and the doctrine of God's kingdom upon earth particularly, to have an influence on criticism.

In recent times, critical investigations of the sacred books have pretty generally proceeded on the principle, that doctrinal

views ought not to exert any influence upon inquiries respecting the genuineness of the Scriptures. It has been easy to lay down this principle, because, generally, the binding authority of sacred writ has been denied, and writers have not felt it incumbent on them to admit as an object of faith every thing that was stated in genuine apostolic writings. Indeed, to many an investigator it has been very gratifying, that, in genuine writings of the apostles, things should occur, which to him seemed evident errors; since, in such case, it became more easy to prove, that the apostles even had stated many things erroneously, and that, therefore, what was true in their productions should be separated from what was false. With Luther, however, and all the other old theologians, the case was different. They acknowledged the Scriptures as binding on their faith; and, therefore, could by no means wholly exclude doctrinal considerations. For, were a book proved to be apostolical by all possible historical and internal arguments, but plainly subverted the gospel, and preached a different Christ from the true historical Son of God and man, no faithful teacher of the church of Christ should receive and use any such production, —notwithstanding all the evidence in its favor,—any more than listen to an angel from heaven who should bring another gospel. (Gal. 1: 8.) Such was Luther's position; and, in this view, we may respect and honor his opposition to the epistle of James and the Revelation of John. His only error in this, in itself commendable, endeavor boldly to distinguish what was antichristian, was, that he decided too rashly and hastily, and thus did not investigate with sufficient thoroughness, and, on the ground of appearances merely, pronounced that to be not biblical which in reality was so. That this was the case in regard to his judgment concerning the discrepancy between James and Paul is, at the present day, universally admitted. In regard to the Revelation, however, many still think, that he judged correctly, although, in my opinion, he erred here as much as in relation to the epistle of James.

We cannot say, therefore, that doctrinal considerations are not of the least consequence in critical investigations; though certainly we must not permit them to have an improper influence, so as to disturb the historical investigation, nor too hastily make an objective rule of our present subjective views, but endeavor to investigate more thoroughly what is at present obscure and inexplicable. Such an endeavor will often educe

a modification of our views; and we may find, that what seemed erroneous contains profound and sublime truths.

In particular, this would undoubtedly be the case with many, if they could determine to consider more closely the doctrine respecting God's kingdom upon earth, which has always been the greatest cause of offence in the Revelation. True, it is not to be denied, that the history of the fortune of this doctrine is by no means calculated to favor it; for every thing which human ignorance and human malice have been able to devise appears to have concentrated itself in the misapprehensions of this doctrine. If, however, pains be taken to separate these misapprehensions and perversions from the doctrine itself, and we are impartial enough to consider, that often very profound truths, which take a mighty hold of the human mind, are most exposed to abuse and may become most dangerous, and that hardly any other religion has been misused to such abominable purposes as the Christian religion itself, and yet, that it is not on that account the less true or less divine, we shall easily attain the proper fundamental idea of the doctrine of God's kingdom upon earth; which is so simple, that we cannot understand how its truth could ever be doubted, until we remember the products of nonsense which have been propounded under its sanction. This simple radical idea is merely, that, as in regard to an individual man, God, by the Saviour, redeems not merely a particular part of him,—his spirit alone, his soul alone, or his body alone,—but the *whole* man, body, soul and spirit, so the redeeming power of Christ has for its object the deliverance of the entire human race, and of the creation in general, from the yoke of sin. As, therefore, the end of salvation for the individual is the glorification of his nature, the end of all things in the universe, on the same principle, is the glorification of the universe. Proceeding from this fundamental idea, the Revelation teaches, in sublime imagery, agreeing perfectly with the statements of our Lord and the apostles,—which are less formal and rather take the doctrine for granted, and thus are more incidental,—that a period will come, in which not only, as had already been the case, the spirit of Jesus Christ should prevail in secret and guide men's minds, but should also gain the victory externally, and found a kingdom of peace and righteousness upon earth. Now, that with the arrival of this reign of peace, there will be connected, on the one hand, the appearance of Jesus Christ and a resurrection of many saints and



pious men, and, on the other, a previous mighty struggle on the part of evil, does indeed follow very naturally from the fundamental idea, and the supposed development of good and evil ; but these points are only incidental. The principal idea is, the perfect return of the supremacy of good, the restoration of the lost paradise to an earth which has been laid waste by sin. Millions desire this most earnestly, hope and pray for it even, without ever imagining, that it is the very doctrine which they think themselves bound to oppose, or at least unable to admit without deviating from correct belief. Even the excellent reformers had but an imperfect notion of this doctrine, though it is as simple as it is sublime ; and for this reason, in a great measure, that they saw around them senseless fanatics, who dishonored the gospel and caused unspeakable injury, by the grossest misconstructions and perversions of this doctrine.

It would not have been worth while, with our present purpose, to say even the little we have said on this subject, were there not so many well-meaning men, of real piety, who, notwithstanding the most striking historical proofs, can never prevail upon themselves to admit the Revelation to be a genuine apostolic production, and therefore entitled to a place in the canon, and thus to become a rule of faith ; because they feel, that then they must, in consequence, admit the reign of God upon earth into their circle of belief, which they suppose they neither can nor ought to do. May such be led to a thorough investigation of this idea, and of all the passages of Scripture which relate thereto, that the acknowledgment of evangelical truth, in this respect, may be promoted, and its fulfilment be rendered nearer at hand !

In passing now to the consideration of the historical evidence in favor of the genuineness of the Revelation, we must again call to mind the latter days of the life of John the evangelist. He lived, as we know with certainty, the longest of all the apostles, as late as to the end of the first century. The scene of his successful labors at the close of his life was the city of Ephesus, in the vicinity of which were situated all those cities to which were directed the seven epistles contained in the first chapters of the Revelation. Ephesus, moreover, was one of the great centres of business in the Roman empire, and was much frequented by Christians of all countries.

It must, therefore, be admitted, that it was easy for the Ephesian church particularly, and indeed for the whole ancient

church, to arrive at the highest certainty in regard to the writings of John. In particular, there could be no uncertainty whether John had composed so peculiar, so very remarkable, a production, as the Revelation. We must, therefore, admit, that if, among the fathers of the church in that region, we met with even uncertainty in regard to its author, it would be a very suspicious circumstance; and, on the other hand, unanimity in their conviction of the genuineness of the book must be a very decisive testimony in its favor. Now, we meet with this last to a surprising degree. First, we have the testimony of Papias, bishop of Hierapolis, in Phrygia, in behalf of the book. This man was personally acquainted with several of the apostles, and, among them, with the evangelist John. His testimony is, therefore, of the greatest consequence. It is true, an attempt has been made to invalidate it, on the ground, that only a late writer, named Andreas, attributes to Papias any knowledge of the Revelation; but careful consideration of the principal passage respecting Papias, in Eusebius (*Hist. Eccl.* III., 39),—which certainly ought to be thus examined,—will show, that Eusebius has given a wrong representation concerning Papias, in more than one respect; and every thing is in favor of the supposition, that Papias was acquainted with all John's writings. Eusebius is one of those fathers of the church who were very much prejudiced against the doctrine concerning the Millennium; and it is on this account, that he so strongly opposed Papias. Since this ancient bishop was a principal supporter of that doctrine, his testimony may, on that account, appear partial; and yet, his close relation to John cannot have permitted him, notwithstanding all his predilection for this doctrine, to attribute to that writer a production which was not his. Justin Martyr, too, along with Papias, testifies in favor of the apostolic origin of the Apocalypse. He was, indeed, born in Palestine, but he taught in Ephesus, and there had opportunity to learn how things really were. Now, this father expressly declares the Revelation to have been written by the evangelist John, one of the twelve. So, too, Melito, bishop of Sardis, one of the cities to which the epistles in the Revelation are addressed. We cannot but presume, that such a man would know the author of a production which contained an epistle to the church over which he presided.

The same is true of Polycarp, the celebrated bishop of Smyrna, to which church, likewise, an apocalyptic epistle is

addressed. This man was an immediate disciple of the evangelist John. Polycarp's pupil, Irenæus, who removed from Asia Minor to the south of France, and became bishop of Lyons, gives us an account of Polycarp's relation to John, and makes use of the Revelation throughout his writings, without mentioning even the slightest opposition to it. It is also employed as really apostolical by the western fathers, Tertullian, Cyprian, Hippolytus, &c., without any mention of a doubt as to its canonical authority. Still, it may be said, all these men were neither learned nor critical; they found in the Revelation their favorite doctrine in regard to the kingdom of God upon earth, and therefore, they readily received it as a production of John's. In decisive opposition to such remarks, we adduce the Alexandrian fathers, Clement and Origen. These were not only the most learned men of the day, and the best skilled in criticism, but, in particular, were *opponents of the doctrine of the Millennium*; yet neither had any idea, that the Revelation of John was not composed by the evangelist of that name. They chose to get rid of the odious contents of the book by a forced interpretation, rather than by opposing the tradition of the whole church. A stronger combination of historical evidence in favor of the apostolic origin of the book is, in fact, hardly conceivable! The weight of this evidence is augmented by what we know respecting those who doubted the genuineness of the book. Of this number was a presbyter of the Roman church, whose name was Gaius. This man made it a set purpose, to oppose the doctrine of the Millennium; and because the defenders of it naturally appealed, first of all, to the Revelation, he declared it spurious, without, however, presenting any historical or critical reasons for doing so. In order to degrade the Revelation, it was even referred by him to a heretic, Cerinthus, who was said to have written it in John's name. But in this he clearly evinced, that he was carried away by his feelings; for no one can by any means attribute the Revelation to an intentional deceiver, for this reason, that it would have been an object with such a man, to denote with precision the person of the evangelist, so as to cause the work to be regarded as his. This, however, has not been done, and thus we are not permitted to take any view in opposition to the book, except it be, that another John, and not the evangelist, composed it. This opinion was first stated and defended in a formal manner by the learned Dionysius,

bishop of Alexandria, a disciple of Origen. But as this man lived at so late a period, that authentic oral tradition was no longer within his reach, no more stress is to be laid upon his doubts, than upon the learned objections of more modern days. We come, therefore, to this result. *All historical tradition is unanimous in behalf of John's composition of the Revelation.*

Now, in order to invalidate this decided testimony of antiquity, very striking arguments ought to be adduced; but observe what are the reasons which prevail upon modern investigators to deny, that the evangelist John was the author of the Revelation, and then judge whether they are strong enough to countervail such testimony. In enumerating these reasons, I follow a distinguished scholar of the present day, whom I very much esteem and love as my former instructor, although I differ entirely from his views. I do, indeed, believe him to be, in general, very impartial and unprejudiced; but nevertheless I think him to be influenced in his judgment of the Revelation by the force of prejudices which were early imbibed by the church, and have been widely diffused.\*

In the first place, it is urged by this learned man, John never mentions himself as the writer, in his gospel and epistles; would he do so, then, in the Apocalypse? It is true he says only, that this circumstance is worthy of attention; but as it stands as one of his arguments, it seems to have been regarded as of considerable importance. Of what consequence, however, is such a difference in practice, since all we can say is, simply, that the author chose, in this case, to employ a different form from his usual one? What writer is there, who does not act as he pleases in regard to such points?

In the second place, the variation from his other writings, in point of language, is adduced. The fact is indisputable. The language of the gospel is pure Greek, smooth and accurate; that of the Revelation, on the contrary, is harsh, rugged, full of inaccuracies of expression and real grammatical mistakes. But it is not true, that all difference in phraseology indicates different writers. Compare, for example, the earliest writings of Göthe, Schiller, Herder, with the latest productions of the same authors. Especially, take an author who attempts to

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\* Prof. De Wette, in his *Einleit. ins Neue Testament*. (*Introd. to the N. Testament.*)



write in a foreign language; must not his first essays be of a totally different character from his later ones? He has not complete mastery of the language; he struggles not only with the sense, but with the form; and this must necessarily make the phraseology even of the most practised intellect somewhat cumbrous. This is exactly the case with John's Revelation. It was his earliest production in the Greek language, occasioned by the fearful occurrences during Nero's persecution. These cast the sympathizing mind of the beloved disciple of Jesus into deep meditation, during which the spirit of prophecy showed him the future fortunes of the church and its final conquest over Judaism and heathenism. It was, therefore, composed some twenty years earlier than the gospel and epistles seem to have been written, and in a language which, to John, a native of Palestine, must have been a foreign one. Now, the Revelation appears exactly like the production of a man who had not yet acquired the requisite skill in the Greek language; and, as its internal characteristics, likewise, show, that it was written in the early part of John's life, before Jerusalem was destroyed, it is, in fact, impossible to see, how one can ascribe importance to this circumstance of the difference of style, in opposition to the tradition, that the evangelist John was the author of the production; the rather as there is undeniably very much in the language, which bears a close affinity to those writings that are admitted to be John's.

The same may be said of the third observation, that the style of the Revelation is, in the following respect, very unlike that which we find in the gospel and epistles; viz., that the former exhibits a lively, creative fancy, while in the latter quiet, deep feeling predominates. In regard to this remark, which, likewise, is correct, we are to consider, first, that the same individual, in different stages of mental development, will make use of different styles of expression. The earlier works of the same writer are ordinarily more ardent, more imaginative, than his later. Moreover, the imagery in the Revelation is not by any means to be regarded as the arbitrary production of a rich fancy, but rather as actual appearances to John's mind from the operation of the divine Spirit within him. I admit, that John would not have been selected as the medium of these communications of the Spirit, had there not been in his whole organization a special adaptation for such impressions; but still, susceptibility to them is not the same as positive pro-

ductive fancy. Finally, it is not to be forgotten, in this view, that John's other writings are of a more historical, or else purely didactic nature ; while, on the other hand, the Revelation is a prophetic production. It would, therefore, be totally unnatural, that the same style should be observable in the Apocalypse as in John's other writings.

The only remaining point alleged in confirmation of the difference between the Revelation and other writings of John is, that they exhibit a totally different *doctrinal aspect*. In particular, stress is laid on this circumstance, that in the gospel nothing is found of what forms the main topic of the Apocalypse, viz., the expectation of a visible coming of our Lord, and the establishment of his kingdom upon earth. Moreover, all that is said in the Revelation respecting good and bad angels is of a more Jewish cast, we are told, than we should expect John's views to have been, from examining his other writings. It would appear, that, if this be really so, it is a reason of some weight against the genuineness of the book ; for we cannot suppose the apostles to have altered their doctrinal views ; and, plainly, difference in the character of the writing could not affect the doctrine, as both in historical and prophetic productions there must exist the same fundamental views on the part of the writer. Now, the remark is indisputably correct ; but the true reason of the fact has been misapprehended. For, first, the same difference which is exhibited between the gospel of John and the Apocalypse also appears, on a comparison, between John's gospel and the first three. These latter, like the Revelation, present many doctrines and views agreeable to the Jews, particularly the visible coming of our Lord to his kingdom upon earth ; while nothing of all this is touched upon by the gospel of John, notwithstanding there was ample occasion for doing so. It does not thence follow, however, that either John or the others err in representing the discourses of Jesus Christ, since the same person *may* have spoken sometimes spiritually, as in John's discourses, and sometimes in a Judaizing manner, as according to the other evangelists. The correct solution of this difficulty is to be sought solely in the *special purpose* of the gospel of John, with which the first epistle stands in such intimate connection, that it is not strange it should partake of the same character. The two other epistles are too short to be here taken into consideration. This evangelist had a particular class of persons

in view in his work, viz., men similar to the later Gnostics, and who in certain views coincided with them perfectly. In particular, they, like the Gnostics, speculated on divine things in a peculiar manner, and sought to idealize the real facts in the history of Jesus, more than the true apostolic doctrine permitted. These men, among whom were many very sensible and well-meaning persons, were those whom John had particularly in view in the composition of his gospel. With apostolic wisdom he avoided, in this work, every thing which could offend the prejudices of these persons. Many Jewish ideas, which had a very good and genuine foundation, and according to the first gospels were expressed by the Saviour himself, he kept back,—becoming in a manner a Gnostic to the Gnostics, without doing the least injury, however, to the cause of truth. He depicted Christianity, therefore, to their minds, just as they could most easily comprehend it, convinced that when once they had seized the idea they would gradually learn to understand it thoroughly.

If now we adhere steadfastly to this point of view, it will appear perfectly intelligible, how the same John, who wrote thus in the gospel, should appear to express himself so differently in the Revelation, in the composition of which no such reference existed; though still he was always governed by the same doctrinal views at every period of his life. And thus we must declare, that no one of these reasons is calculated to disturb us in regard to the correctness and truth of the tradition of the first centuries after Christ. If the repugnance which is felt towards the contents of the Apocalypse be only conquered, men will soon cease to rate so highly the reasons which are adduced against its apostolic origin, and to think so little of the importance of the unanimous tradition of antiquity. And that this may soon happen is the more to be wished, as the progressive development of the church makes the Revelation more and more important in testing what is now occurring among Christians, and what awaits them in the immediate future.

## ARTICLE II.

WHAT CAN BE DONE TO INCREASE THE USEFULNESS OF  
CHRISTIAN MINISTERS:\*

THIS is a question of vital importance to the church of Christ, and it bears an intimate relation to the welfare of the souls of men. Ministers of religion are "set for the defence of the gospel," to "watch for souls as they that must give account," and as under-shepherds of the great Shepherd of Israel, to "feed the flock of God." The character and efforts of this order of men have always borne an intimate relation to the spirituality and prosperity of the church, and to the extension of the work of salvation. To be a sweet savor unto God in the salvation of the lost, and to edify the church in love, the ministry must be characterized by a certain degree of faith, of purity, of intelligence, and of zeal. Without these, this divine institution must fail of accomplishing the design of its establishment.

Whether we look at the direct bearing of the labors of the ministers of Christ on the characters of men, and on the moral complexion that society shall take, or at the influence which they must exert on the present happiness of men, or at the duration of the results of this influence on their final state, stretching forward, as these results do, into the remoteness of eternal ages, we can contemplate no institution so important as the ministry of reconciliation. It is, therefore, a question of the gravest import, how can the Christian ministry be made most directly and extensively subservient to the design of its institution? Or if it be found not to be exerting, at present, all the influence, or a less pure influence, than was contemplated by him who established it, how can its influence be purified and increased? How can it be elevated to the standard which our Saviour had before his mind, when he said to his disciples, "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature?"

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\* This article was first read as an essay before a Ministers' Meeting, and it is published by their request. A few paragraphs have been omitted.



That the results of the efforts of the ministers of Christ do not now come up to the measure of apostolical success is obvious to every intelligent and candid observer of the state and progress of the Christian church. Every one who can fully compare the present with the past, with the Bible, and the history of the church before him, will be struck with the vast disparity between the success of the ministry now, and that of the same order of men in the first age of Christianity. But is it not within the compass of possibility, that the labors of the present ministry should resemble, more than they now do, the labors of the apostles; and that the success of these labors should more nearly resemble theirs? But to realize such results will require labor, self-denial, holiness and wisdom, both on the part of the ministry, and on the part of the church. Were the present ministry of the church to preach like a Paul or a Peter, imbued with their piety, and breathing the spirit that lived in them and actuated their efforts, and were the church to hold up the hands of her ministers, to aid them in their labors, and to bear them out in all pious and judicious efforts to advance the cause of Christ, we might hope for results, in all essential points, such as blessed the primitive days of Christianity.

It is evident, that the ministry has stepped down, or rather, perhaps, been thrust down, from the vantage ground it stood on when Paul, and Peter, and Barnabas turned multitudes to righteousness. True, the Christian ministry does now wield a vast influence. But its influence is obviously not of so pure and holy, nor of so life-giving a character, as it was then. The inhabitants of the world do not fall before it as then. We see not the multitude of conversions under the labors of the ministry now, that were then seen. We see not the church so full of faith, and zeal, and holiness, as it was in its primitive days. Bring down to us, from those days of primitive simplicity and faith, a Paul or a John, and how vastly would he stand above us in these stirring days, in holiness and devotedness to God!

These remarks may, perhaps, contribute to show, that the usefulness of ministers of the gospel, in general, needs to be increased. Our question now is, how can this be done? With this question before us, let us, in the fear of God, and relying on his aid, advert to several topics which may contribute somewhat to furnish an answer.

1. An increase of personal piety in ministers would doubtless contribute greatly to the increase of their usefulness. It is perfectly evident, that there is great need of a high degree of personal piety in the ranks of that class of men whom God has set for the defence of the gospel. True, we need an amount of mental power and of intellectual discipline, which can wield arguments that all the adversaries of Christianity will not be able to gainsay nor resist. These are highly necessary in their sphere; they may silence an adversary of our religion; but while they do this, they may fail to convert him from the error of his ways, and save his soul from death. Our mighty reasoners, without warm and devoted piety towards God, will never bring back the world from its revolt.

There is, at the present moment, a vast intellectual power in the ranks of the ministry, and that power is rapidly increasing. Every year makes large accessions to it. But while we ought to pour forth ascriptions of praise to God for this, we ought to be solemnly impressed with the sentiment, that there needs more faith in God, more self-denial, and more devotedness to the work which belongs to ministers. Men who are called with this holy calling, undoubtedly, ought to seek their own interests less, and the glory of the Redeemer and the welfare of souls more. Our Saviour, in the days of his flesh, frowned on the ambition to be the greatest, which he saw in his disciples. And does he not now see too much of the same unhallowed feeling?

The requisite amount of piety in the heart of a minister will be a strong barrier against his being particularly fastidious respecting the kind of place which he is to occupy. With this, he will cheerfully stand on whatever part of the walls of Zion the providence of God may place him. He may have been accustomed, from childhood, to all the elegances of life; but this may be no reason why he should hesitate to accept a location in a plain country village; or go and practise all the self-denials, and endure all the privations, which are incident to a frontier settlement; or go and meet all that is self-denying, and witness all that is disgusting and revolting to humanity, in a land of heathens. The inquiry, in the mind of a minister of any thing like apostolic piety and zeal, will not be so much for a respectable society, or a field where his talents will be most appreciated and admired, but where he can do most good, and be instrumental, most directly and extensively, in

saving souls. It is not so much the greatest as it is the best men, who are most widely useful in spreading the savor of the Redeemer's name. There is an unction, evidently from above, attending the man of faith, and holiness, and fervent prayer, which cannot be replaced by any amount of talents, or by any quantity of learning. It is not giant intellect alone, nor extensive learning and deep research, nor well-concerted plans,—one alone, nor all together,—before which the world will fall and be turned to God; but it is fervent prayer, strong faith, undeviating Christian integrity, and unconquerable love; and these breathed forth in a living testimony, the burden of which shall be, "Christ crucified." It is by these, far more than by the former, that the church is built up in faith and love, and made to exemplify the purity of the Christian profession, and the efficacy of faith in Christ; by these, that her members become the light of the world and the salt of the earth.

There is, without doubt, a large amount of fervent, exemplary piety in the ranks of the present ministry; probably more than any age has been blest with, since the primitive ages of Christianity. Still, it may well be doubted, whether there is yet the amount of piety, even among that class of men who are proverbially a large part of the excellent of the earth, before which the power of sin may be expected to melt away, and holiness fill the world. There is faith, but it wants strength, and clearness, and that implicit reliance on the arm of Jehovah, which would cause each minister of religion to say, "My soul, wait thou only upon God." There is love to the souls of men, taking the character of concern for their welfare, but it wants the intenseness of an all-absorbing interest. There is devotedness to God, but it wants concentration, and that uniformity and rapidity of development, which it would have, did it occupy every feeling and desire.

The church, as a body, can never be expected to rise above its ministers, in piety and devotedness to the work of salvation. The ministry ought to rise to an eminence in holiness, which it has not for many centuries occupied, and to be able to say to the church, "Come up hither."

To prosper, then, in their work, the heralds of the cross must rise to a great nearness to God, be strong in faith, and continually exemplify an entire devotedness to the cause of Christ. Thus they are to put forth every practicable effort to win men to the way of holiness. In this way, it is to be ex-

pected, that the purity of the Christian profession will be maintained in the church, and that men will be won over, in multitudes, to the faith of Christ.

Would the ministers of religion exemplify the intrepidity of the most fearless and faithful of the primitive disciples, they must have their faith. Would they exhibit the amiableness of the beloved disciple, they must have his love to Christ. Would they see the world rapidly turning from sin, and embracing the gospel, they must hold for the world to read the living epistle of their own devotedness to their great work. Then will they be able to say, in some sort, to large numbers, "Though we be not apostles to others, yet doubtless we are to you; for the seal of our apostleship are ye in the Lord."

The increase of personal piety in the ministry will give a proportionate increase of spirituality to their discourses and their prayers. Then will they come to their people in the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ. At the throne of grace, they will present the fervent and effectual prayer. The church will thus be edified in love, and established in the faith. Men who are destitute of the faith of Christ will, in large numbers, be reached by an influence which will bear directly on their immortal welfare.

The increase of piety in the ministry would doubtless give a more decidedly religious tone to the intercourse of ministers with society. Religion, in such a state of things, would be far from being confined to the pulpit; it would not be characterized as merely a matter of professional regard; but would pervade and sweeten all the intercourse and the charities of life. And in proportion as this characteristic pervades the ranks of those who are devoted to the sacred function, and causes them to rise in conformity to God, may the blessing of God be expected to descend upon them. Then will it be extensively confessed, that God is, of a truth, among his ministers and his people.

2. It would undoubtedly increase the usefulness of ministers, were the stock of information possessed by the ministry rendered more ample. Notwithstanding the primary and paramount importance of deep and devoted piety, still this characteristic of the ministry cannot dispense with the aid of sound and extensive learning. The man who ministers at the Christian altar must be familiar with a wide field of diversified information.



It is highly desirable, that he be somewhat familiar with the secular interests of his people, and with the means and occupations by which those interests are sustained and promoted. People will probably have but little sympathy with the man who may be ever so desirous of doing them good, if they find him wholly ignorant of their occupations and pursuits; and especially if they find him entirely uninterested in the things which, during most of the time, must employ their hands and minds.

But this description of knowledge will rather contribute to facilitate a minister's intercourse with society, and to conciliate their good will, than to aid him as a preacher. He should be a man of *learning*; and the wider and more diversified the fields of science and literature which he has surveyed, the better. Let him be intimately acquainted with the philosophy of matter and mind; let him be able to wield more than the logic of an Aristotle, and the rhetoric of a Demosthenes; let his mind be imbued with all the strength and accuracy which the deep study of the mathematics can give him; let him be furnished with all the readiness and richness of thought and ease of diction which a knowledge of ancient languages can bestow; let him be familiar with the history of the past, and especially the history of the church in all the vicissitudes through which it has passed; in a word, let his mind be a rich, well-arranged, and well-furnished storehouse, from which he can draw materials to bear on the efficiency of his labors; and you have a man, who, as far as the influence of mere learning can go, is thoroughly furnished unto every good work.

But especially on religious subjects does the mind of a messenger of God's truth need to be richly furnished. He needs to know precisely what the message is which he is to bear, the character of the beings to whom he is to bear it, and the mode best adapted to the effects which his message is intended to produce. His stores of knowledge on all that pertains to religion cannot be too ample. Though he may have all the learning in the world besides, yet if he be wanting here, he will but poorly wield the weapons of his warfare, and but feebly stand in defence of the gospel.

To know how to wield successfully the sword of the Spirit, the minister of the gospel needs, above all things, to be familiar with the Bible; by its clear and infallible light to have surveyed the evidence, the doctrines, the precepts, the spirit, and

the fair proportions of Christianity. It would be well, indeed, if all the ministers at the Christian altar were deeply acquainted with every spot in the entire field of human learning and human investigation ; but this would of course consume more than one short life. They ought, then, to lend their most strenuous efforts to the acquisition of what it concerns them most to know. Along with obtaining what they may of human learning, they must, by all means, and at all hazards, be familiar with the Bible. It is far greater praise to a minister, to be mighty in the Scriptures, than to be familiar with all that may be known besides. What miserable novices must the clergy have been, at the time when Luther arose, ignorant as they were, universally, of the Scriptures ! Compared with them, the plain, unlettered Christian of our times, who knows and loves his Bible, is a Solomon. The Bible is the chart, by which the minister is to hold his own course towards the reward of the just ; and by its light he is to take others by the hand, and lead them onward in the highway which is cast up for the ransomed of the Lord. With the Bible, then, he who would win the souls of men to Christ must be most familiar. His acquaintance with its truths, its directions, its warnings, and its motives,—all having a direct reference to human duty and human salvation,—should be deep and exact. And he should be well aware of the means best calculated to bring these truths to bear on the hearts and consciences of men.

These remarks, of course, suggest the necessity of close study. No minister, whatever may be his talents, or previous acquisitions, can safely dispense with this essential preparation for acceptable and useful preaching. There is no point in his history, till he is discharged from the service to which his life is devoted, when he is at liberty to cease to give himself to study. A man entrusted with the sacred function may, indeed, be busy ; he may be even laboriously employed, and that, for a while at least, to some good purpose, without much study. But his ministry will not wear. In almost every case, his preaching will soon be little more than the recitation of the same thoughts in almost the same words, which he has presented before, perhaps again and again, till the more discerning among his people have learned as well the character in which his thoughts are wont to run, as they have the way from their own houses to the sanctuary. No man can make up in another way essential deficiencies in study. They will stand out

in his ministrations, too prominently not to exert an injurious influence. It is one of the laws of Christianity, that her ministers *must* "study to show themselves approved unto God," and that thus only, in reliance on his help, they may hope to be "workmen that need not be ashamed." Without this, the hope of being permanently useful in any place is out of the question. If there is one class of men on earth who *must* study, closely and intensely, to succeed in their calling, ministers of religion constitute such a class.

It is not for any man to say, how large an amount of information a man of piety and suitable talents should have gained, to authorize him to commence the work of preaching the gospel; there is more danger, at present, of setting the amount too low than too high; but we are authorized to say, it is essential, that his store of information be constantly increasing.

Human nature is a study to which he who would influence men must lend his attention. The man of God needs to look attentively at the various phenomena which society presents, and to learn accurately the characters of individuals who constitute the living mass, to scan their feelings, prejudices, predilections, sentiments, frailties and virtues, and to ascertain the points where a holy influence may most successfully be brought to bear upon them. If the man of God is essentially wanting here, he may wish ever so much to do good, but he will meet with many a failure. His schemes for doing good will miscarry, not for want of interest and zeal, but because they are not adapted to the end desired, or are not wisely prosecuted. Surely, he who would affect the minds of others ought to know something of the structure of those minds, and well understand the means of access to them. If he would successfully assail the strong-holds of sin, in which the heart of man is too often intrenched, he needs to know the most vulnerable points, where an attack may be made with the best hope of success.

We have said, that the minister of religion must be familiar with the Bible. To do this, he must carefully study it, that he may learn, and be certain, what is truth. Without this, he may be a fine, showy orator, may please the taste of the refined man of the world, and captivate the giddy and the vain with the beautiful drapery of his thoughts, and with the gracefulness of his action; but he will not be a sweet savor unto God in the salvation of men. If the minister of Christ would

address every power of the mind, and arouse every feeling of the soul, and gain upon the convictions of the understanding; if he would make appeals to the conscience, which cannot be resisted; if he would bear home to the chambers of the soul the truths of the Almighty; he will himself need a soul deeply imbued with divine truth, a mind well furnished from the armory of heaven. He must well understand the grand outlines of Christianity, and be able to bring them to a practical bearing upon the well-being of man. To do all this, the man of God will need deep and earnest study; study in solemn dependence on God; study on his knees, and with the solemnities of the judgment in view.

3. It would greatly enlarge the usefulness of ministers, were they to pay an increased attention to the preparation of their sermons. Every minister ought to take care, that his plans be lucid and judicious, and that his sermons be rich in matter and in illustration, powerful in argument, and overpowering in conviction and persuasion. It is not for us to determine, whether discourses shall be written or unwritten; but this we insist on,—they should be well prepared. The excuse of want of time, though it is often plausible, is rarely to be admitted, in reference to this point. What is the primary and chief business of a minister? Is it not to *preach the gospel*? Why, then, should not other things yield to the preparation requisite for performing this service properly, and not this be allowed to yield to other things, whose importance is, at most, secondary to it?

When we say, that sermons should be well prepared, we mean, that the subjects should be well chosen, the topics naturally and clearly arranged, the whole full of thought, glowing with intenseness of interest, shining with truth, and full of persuasion, which will melt and move the soul. We mean, that such language should be used, as will constitute acceptable words; language far removed from the coarse, the low, or the vulgar; language which shall accord with the seriousness and majesty of the message of the gospel, and “well become the messenger of God to guilty men.” In a word, every sermon ought to be a good sermon, well adapted to compass the great end of preaching. We would by no means have a minister neglect any of the duties which belong to his office; but we would say, “these ought ye to have done, but not to leave the other undone.”



Ought not every minister to aim at all this? And might not every one who is called and qualified to preach the gospel, attain to it? But we fear there are multitudes of ministers, who do not even aim to have their sermons well prepared, nor their thoughts clothed in acceptable words. But these are not the men to hold an influence with persons of taste and learning. They may have influence for a time, and do good in some spheres, no doubt; but there are persons in every community whom the mediocrity of their sermons prevents their reaching. Sermons prepared as we have been endeavoring to urge, will cost time and labor, will cost close and continuous thinking, will cost fervent prayer and earnest wrestling with God. But what man of God, who ministers at the Christian altar, can satisfy his conscience, or his desire for the approbation of God and good men, with any thing less than this? While it is his to teach the people knowledge, can he satisfy himself without being able to do this fully, and to the best possible advantage? Ought he not to be able to "warn every man, and teach every man in all wisdom?" to reach the highest, as well as to condescend to men of low degree? to bear the truths of heaven to the rich and refined, as well as to preach the gospel to the poor?

We have said, that the leading business of a minister of religion is to preach the word. And ought he not to aim at the utmost practicable amount of good in this main branch of the duties of his vocation? We doubt not, that a multitude of things are exhibited under the name of sermons, which are any thing but instructive discourses, which are calculated to do any thing almost, rather than to teach the people knowledge. It is doubtless true, that it would vastly increase the usefulness, the influence, and the respectability of the ministry, if it should become the general practice among them, to endeavor to preach better sermons, to expend upon them more thought, and to offer to God, in reference to them, more prayer. They would be likely to interest their congregations more; many congregations would be increased by this means; the impressions made upon the minds of the people would be more deep, distinct, and abiding; men would be more likely to be shut up unto the faith; and the heralds of the gospel would be, to larger numbers of their hearers, a savor of life unto life.

4. To have the ministers of religion more exclusively devoted to their appropriate work, and less frequently diverted from it,

and devoted to other objects, would probably enhance their moral power, and thus increase their usefulness. It is not possible for men in general to excel in a diversity of callings, or to labor successfully, unless they are devoted to one single class of pursuits. God has set apart his ministers to one work, and he directs his church to sustain them in it. This is on a principle, which, the more it obtains, the more complete will be the organization of society, the division of labor. This principle has always been deemed wise, and desirable to be employed, whenever it could be applied. And if it can and ought to be applied any where, certainly the ministry of reconciliation is such a sphere. The labors, and cares, and anxieties of the work of the ministry, are business enough for any one man. If there is one calling, in the whole circle of human labor and responsibility, which demands the entire time and energies of the man who is devoted to it, that calling is the work of the ministry of the gospel.

There is a great variety of callings which are good and honorable, as well as this; but God does not intend, that they shall engross the time and labors of him whose business it is to win souls to Christ. It is not the business of a minister to be a farmer, nor a mechanic, nor a merchant, nor a manufacturer. These callings, and many others, may be followed honestly and honorably by other men. But as for the ministers of religion, if they engage in these pursuits, they will inevitably become secularized. Such pursuits, followed up as they must be to prosper, will infallibly give a secularity to the feelings, and to the reputation, too, of a minister. His whole ministry will be in danger of having a taste of worldliness; besides the fact, that he has no time to bestow exclusively on these callings. Labor, in some of these departments, may constitute his bodily exercise, but not his employment. The more he is acquainted with the different branches of business which men follow, the better; but these are not, and should not be, his employment. They are the appropriate, every-day business of other men, and they may glorify God in them; but they are not the appropriate business of him to whom God has said, "Go thou, and preach the gospel."

The cases are rare, if they ever occur, in which ministers are justified in stepping upon the political arena. The political partisan and the minister of the gospel are antipodes to each other. And if political partisanship is unsuitable to the char-

acter of this class of men, it seems to us equally so for them to engage in exciting controversies of a secular, or partly secular, character. In these times of excitement and rapid change, there is almost constantly some subject of controversy before the public mind, which agitates the feelings and divides the opinions of men. This characteristic of the times is obviously unhappy in its tendencies and influence; and for a minister to engage in such controversies is, at least, of doubtful expediency. This class of men are called to stand forth before their fellow-men as the messengers of God to the guilty and the lost, and not as the heralds of a party, on some warmly disputed secular subject. One party may be right, and the opposite wrong; but it does not follow of course, that it is the duty of the man of God to stand forth as the champion of either.

It seems to us, then, altogether desirable, that the ministers of the sanctuary should adhere to their own appropriate work, and thus endeavor to advance the kingdom of Christ among men. Let them strive to fix their own eyes, and the eyes of their people, on the work of preparation for heaven; on the great moral, religious, and eternal interests of men. Let them not step down from this eminence, for any secular or party purpose. Then will they be recognised by their people as the heralds of salvation, and as the accredited messengers of God, both when they speak to them from the pulpit, and when they mingle in the social or family circle. Happy is the man of God, who cannot thus be turned aside from his own beloved, appropriate work, who has the courage to persevere in the way in which God has placed him, and the firmness to resist the solicitations of partisan leaders, to turn him aside from his holy purpose. And happy the people, who find, in the person of their pastor, such a man.

5. Were the stability of the pastoral relation increased, it would doubtless vastly increase the usefulness of ministers. Instability is a strong characteristic of every thing, almost, at present. The relation of ministers and people partakes of this characteristic. In multitudes of places, ministers are settled,—begin their labors,—seem to have a fair prospect of usefulness; all is united and pleasant for a while; by-and-by, some unpleasant circumstance arises, or some more flattering opening presents itself to the eye of the minister; and soon the connection is dissolved. Now, about most of these cases there is, undoubtedly, on the one side or the other, or both, something wrong.



When a people settle a pastor, they ought to calculate to continue to love the man of their choice, and to make the most of him as their minister; and not think of exchanging him, after a few months, or a year or two, for some other man, equally frail and imperfect, or perhaps more so, or for utter and long-continued destitution. And the settled pastor, on the other hand, ought to be content with the people who have chosen him, and with whom he has found it his duty to consent to be united, and make the most of them and of the community around them, over whom, perhaps, he may have some influence. There are, doubtless, exceptions to this rule, but they are not so numerous as to take the place of the rule.

For the situation of ministers to be more permanent would doubtless increase their happiness, improve their circumstances, and add much to the weight of the character of the ministry. When the ties of the pastoral relation are of so frail and slight a character as to be sundered by almost every wind which blows, the affection between pastor and people cannot often be very strong. It will not, generally, have time to become well cemented, before it is sundered. Their mutual confidence must be weak and wavering. And they will find it difficult, for any length of time, cordially to coöperate together for the advancement of the interests of religion. If a people do not intend, that the relation of their pastor to them shall be a permanent thing, they will not generally be anxious to throw much influence into his hands.

Many a church, however, who have been deprived of a pastor, whom they regarded with the sincerest esteem, have found occasion to say, "We thought our pastor loved us; we are sure his labors were useful among us; and they were certainly acceptable, and becoming more so every month. We thought the field he was laboring in adapted to his talents; and, so far as we could see, it occupied all his time and energies. It was to our great edification and comfort, that we listened to his sermons, united in his prayers, were led by him in our devotional meetings, and heard his individual counsels. We loved him, indeed, for his talents, but we loved him more for his piety, his discretion, his devotedness to his work, and the interest which he took in each individual of his people. But, unexpectedly to us, and to our sore disappointment, he has left us, to occupy another field, more imposing, perhaps, in its aspect, but to serve a people who can never love him more



than we did. We love him still ; but so deeply are we wounded, that almost our confidence in the ministry itself is weakened. We feel as we wish we never had had occasion to feel, grieved, disappointed, wounded, disheartened. We had a pastor, under whose ministry we hoped to live, and to grow in grace, and, when our earthly pilgrimage was ended, to be gathered to our people, with him to soothe the anguish which our departure would occasion to surviving relatives ; to die with the hope, that he would take our children by the hand, and point them to the path of the just, and the rewards of faith. But, instead of this, we are now as sheep that have no shepherd, and the ways of Zion do deeply mourn." On how many hearts have the removals of ministers impressed such feelings as these ! And how many endearing connections are formed between ministers and people, only to be enjoyed a few months, or a year or two, and then to be severed ! Often does a pastor suffer himself to be torn from scores around him, to whom he has recently been made the savor of life unto life, and who, for that reason, love him as they can love no other man, and no other minister.

But, while cases of this description have frequently occurred, ministers have oftener still, in the sadness of disappointment, found occasion to complain of an undeserved and unexpected alienation of feeling from them, on the part of a portion of their people, which suggested the necessity of a removal. And all this arose, perhaps, from the novelty of his preaching having worn off,—a circumstance which must occur with every preacher on earth who stops only a few months even in a place. Affectionate, untiring fidelity, an increasing congregation, the revival of religion under their ministry, or any amount or description of prosperity attending their labors, will not be sufficient to prevent the springing up of such roots of bitterness in the path of many a minister of God's word. The ties which unite ministers to their people, and people to their ministers, are, at present, generally, too slender, and too easily sundered. They are like a thread of tow when it touches the fire, easily broken.

Those churches and societies flourish best, in general, where the pastoral relation is most permanent, where there is mutual affection, mutual forbearance, and mutual faithfulness, from year to year, and where neither minister nor people are given to change. We love that people, who, after years of acquaint-

ance with him, prefer to hear their own minister to any stranger who may temporarily occupy his place. We could, were it not invidious, name a considerable number of examples, which clearly show the advantages which evidently result from permanency in the pastoral relation ; and, on the other hand, of the disastrous consequences of frequent change.

The idea of a minister being employed merely by the year is not only objectionable, but revolting. The Bible gives us no intimation of any such arrangement in the days of primitive Christianity. And it seems to us, that a people who so regard the relation of their pastor to them, are not prepared to realize any permanent benefit from his labors. He may wear himself out in their service, in a few months ; but their very arrangement in employing him must almost certainly prevent his acquiring an extensive influence among them. And how much good can he do, with his influence thus circumscribed, and his energies cramped ? Such a people and such a pastor will be strongly tempted to treat each other as most men would treat a farm, which they had rented for a single year, and which they expected to leave at the close of the contract, making the most of it for themselves, to be sure, but to the essential diminution of its value. It will take more than one year, for a minister to become well acquainted with his people, especially if they are numerous ; more than one year, to establish among them an unquestioned, extensive, and salutary influence. And yet, such an influence as this is indispensable to his success.

We are not advocates for the plan of settling a pastor for life ; but we are advocates for having some degree of permanency given to this sacred relation. When a people are looking for one to break to them the bread of life, it is no trifling blessing which they seek. Their selection ought to be made prayerfully, deliberately, and judiciously. The selection of a pastor is now a matter of too much taste,—too precipitately made,—a transaction of a week or two, whereas months, perhaps, ought ordinarily to pass, before the matter is decided. The pastoral relation, once formed, ought to be regarded as having a sacred character attached to it, and not be dissolved hastily or for trivial causes. It ought to be a permanent thing, not subject to the changes of the moon, or to the vicissitudes of the year. It should be understood, that there are mutual duties on the part of pastor and people, and that the imperfections which attach to each must put in requisition continual and mutual forbearance.

One of the prominent characteristics of the present age is, that it is given to change. This trait attaches to the church, and to the ministry. On this subject, we need a redeeming spirit to go abroad among us.

How much more good might pastors do, in most cases, if, having found fields of labor adapted to their talents and habits, they were studiously and faithfully to cultivate them for a long series of years, like a Stillman, a Smith, or a Baldwin. One of the most flourishing churches in New-England, though it has existed about two hundred years, it is said, never dismissed a pastor; but the bodies of all the predecessors of the present pastor are entombed in one graveyard, near the spot where they held their testimony while living. In that church, there has been a succession of mighty men of God, to stand in defence of the gospel. But while the pastoral relation is cemented by ties no stronger than, in many places, it is at present, it is rational to expect, that every thing in the church will be exceedingly fluctuating; that multitudes of churches will rise, and flourish, and wane, and die.

6. The subject which we are now considering is by no means exhausted. And yet the writer has already far transcended the limits which he had prescribed to himself, when he took up his pen. There are several topics remaining, which as really belong to this subject as those which have been discussed; but they must be left, for the present, at least, untouched. To one topic more, however, we would refer. Ministers, it seems to us, ought to endeavor to prolong, as much as possible, the period of their public labor, and, of course, of their usefulness. This duty they owe to themselves, to the church, and to the world. It is undoubtedly their duty, not only to make every month and every year of their public life as available as possible in forwarding their work, but to make the years of their effectiveness in the ministry as *many* as possible. And surely he would do a service to the church, who should, without diminishing their annual usefulness, add somewhat to the years of the active life of her ministers; who should be the means of their being longer able to labor in their sacred vocation, and of their not being superseded and laid aside, while yet they are strong to labor.

It is quite obvious, that, in these days, especially, ministers are loudly called upon to take diligent care of their health. They are admonished of this, by the early death of a large



proportion of their brethren, and by the numerous forms of disease, which seize upon them far more than upon other men of temperate and virtuous habits. This is a class of men who, of all others, need sound minds in sound bodies. There is, probably, not one class of honest men, whose health is more in danger of being broken down than theirs. It has been said, that the present generation of ministers will not live to be old men. And there are causes, operating to an alarming extent, which render the fulfilment of this prediction probable. This is an age of excitement; and excitement often overworks the human constitution and shortens life. Ministers are, in many instances, called upon to perform more labor than they can long sustain. Let us look a moment at the labor which ordinarily falls to the lot of a pastor in these times; the labor that must come upon the minister of a large parish, if he would be faithful to his trust. There are the preparation and preaching of all the sermons which are required for the Sabbath and in the week; doing all that he must do for the Sabbath school; learning what he must learn, and reading what he must read, to keep up with the times; visiting and praying with the sick, and the dying, and the mourners, with all the tenderness and sympathy of a brother; necessary visits from house to house, among his people; a faithful supervision of all that concerns the union, welfare, and spiritual prosperity of the church and congregation; attending all the meetings which must fall to his lot, in season and out of season; and calls abroad, for the aid of various public objects and charities, sometimes almost every week, for months together; and other duties, almost numberless and nameless, which none but a pastor knows how to estimate. Any man, who contemplates all these, and the constant sense of responsibility pressing upon the mind, and often weighing down the spirits, might well say, "Who is sufficient for these things?" No wonder that ministers are shortlived, and that there is hardly an old man among them.

But, aware that all these causes exist, whose tendency is to break down the health and shorten life, ministers ought to guard as much as they may against these tendencies. They ought to economize their strength, keep body and mind in an active and vigorous state, and not suffer drafts to be made upon their strength, which they know they cannot sustain. Then may they hope, that their constitution will not soon be worn out; and they will be as ready as health and vigor can make them, for the diversified exigences which are perpetually occurring.



As a man descends into the vale of years, he may, probably, in most cases, prolong the vigor of his mind and the integrity of his faculties, by keeping them fully and actively employed. Rust will early gather upon the faculties of that man, who suffers them to lie in torpid inactivity. We love to meet a venerable minister of Christ, who is enjoying a green old age, and whose ministry is still fruitful in blessings to the church, while he stands on the border of the grave, and approaches his everlasting crown.

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### ARTICLE III.

#### THE PALI LANGUAGE.\*

THE echoes of mirth still ring in the banqueting halls of the ruined castle, and the groans of the prisoner are still heard in its desolate dungeons. "Ave Maria" still lingers on the ivied walls of the abbey, and the vesper bell still chimes in its mouldering turrets, which have been silent for centuries. Such is imagination, in gazing on the dilapidated structures of past ages, and such are the charms which hang about the dead languages. Imagination associates them with the literature which they contain, and the living beings who breathed and spoke on their pages. Hebrew, which fascinates every one who passes her threshold, would have been forgotten, or remembered only as a Scythian, were she not the bearer of the "oracles of God," teeming with "thoughts that breathe and words that burn." Greek is associated with all that is classical, Sanscrit with the muthoi of thirty thousand gods, and Pali with a superstition, which claims one third of the human race for its votaries.

Pali is the sacred language from Ceylon to Japan; and Boodhism, which it teaches, is the prevailing religion, from the deserts of Cobi to the Chinese seas, and from the peninsula of Kamtschatka to "Chersonesus aurea." The language, however, like the religion which it teaches, seems destined to ob-

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\* This article was sent to us for publication, by our missionary, Rev. Mr. Mason, of Tavoy.

livion. In the land which gave it birth, it is forgotten. China, after being converted to the doctrines which it taught, retains the language in her uncouth characters, as unintelligible, even to her priests, as hieroglyphics, but which, nevertheless, answers all the purposes of devotion where the gods are of "silver and gold, the work of men's hands." How far the language is understood in Burmah may be gathered from the following incidental remarks of Mr. Boardman: "Moung Yay, who, on several former occasions, has visited the zayat, and urged me to study the Burman books, called again this afternoon; and though less insolent than usual, he could not leave without expressing his regret, that I had not learned the Tha-dah-shut-soung (a Pali grammar, the acquisition of which is the highest attainment in knowledge), and then uttered the usual adage, Tha-dah ma tat tsah ma tat; that is, not to understand the Pali grammar is not to understand books. I told him I intended to study the Tha-dah, and proposed to pay him if he would teach it me. 'Ah,' said he, 'I am incapable; I have not studied it myself.' On further inquiry, I found there was not a person in Tavoy qualified to teach me the book."

By previously making himself slightly acquainted with the Sanscrit grammar and lexicon, the writer has succeeded, without further aid or much difficulty, in deciphering the book, which proves to be one of the most curious treatises on language, that ever fell under his observation. It is a complete grammar of the Pali language, on the analytic principle, lately applied by Thiersch and others to the Greek verb. The work consists of upwards of five hundred and fifty brief rules or aphorisms. Each rule is followed by an extended explanation, and the explanation is followed by examples, which illustrate the rule. The whole work is divided into eight volumes. The first volume treats of letters and permutations, embracing fifty-one rules. The second volume treats of declension, embracing nouns, adjectives and pronouns, in two hundred and ten rules. The third volume treats of government, in forty-five rules. The fourth volume treats of compound words, in twenty-five rules. The fifth volume contains sixty-three rules, and treats of the formation of patronymics, collectives, derivative adjectives, and adverbs. The sixth volume treats of verbs, in one hundred and eighteen rules. The seventh volume has ninety-eight rules, and treats of the formation of participles and various kinds of nouns, as denominative nouns, passive nouns, instru-

mentive nouns, recipient nouns, communicative nouns, and possessive nouns. The eighth volume contains forty-seven rules, and treats principally of the formation of abstract nouns.

As a specimen of the work, the following rules are translated literally from the second volume :

Rule (1.) "And to these [roots are] inflections."

" (2.) "Se, yau; an, yau; na, he; sa, nan; smā, he; sa, nan; sming, su."

" (3.) "The letters e, u, [are called] za, la."\*

" (4.) "These feminine [are called] pa."\*

" (5.) "et [feminine is called] ga."\*

The second rule above gives the regular inflections for nouns as follows :

	Singular.	Plural.
<i>Nominative.</i>	se	yau
<i>Accusative.</i>	an	yau
<i>Instrumentive.</i>	na	he
<i>Dative.</i>	sa	nan
<i>Ablative.</i>	smā	he
<i>Genitive.</i>	sa	nan
<i>Locative.</i>	sming	su

The rules which follow teach, that certain changes take place in some of these inflections when the roots terminate in *za*, *la*; that other changes take place when they terminate in *pa*; and others when they end in *ga*, which, it will be readily seen, in effect, makes four declensions, in inverse order; (1) feminines ending in *a*; (2) feminines ending in *e*, *u*; (3) masculines and neuters in *e*, *u*, and (4) all not included in the above; among which is a regular declension of neuter nouns terminating in *a*; but roots with other finals are all irregular; and the principal part of the volume is occupied in treating of these irregularities.

The following rules are translated from the sixth volume :

Rule (1.) "Present tense.	te	ante	se	hta	me	ma
" (2.) "Imperative.	tai	antai	sai	whai	ai	whai."
	tu	antu	he	hta	me	ma
" (3.) "Potential.	tan	antan	su	whau	aia	mhasai."
	aiya	aiyung	aiyase	aiyahta	aiyame	aiyama
" (4.) "Aorist.	aihta	airan	aihtau	aiyawhau	aiyan	aiyamha."
	a	u	ai	tta	a	mha
" (5.) "Yesterday. Imperf.	tta	rai	ttau	whau	e	mhai."
	a	u	au	tta	a	mha
" (6.) "To-day. Imperfect.	tta	ttung	sai	whan	e	mhasai."
	e	ung	au	tta	e	mha
" (7.) "Future.	a	u	sai	whan	a	mhai."
	ssate	ssante	ssase	ssahtha	ssame	ssama
" (8.) "Perfect.	ssatai	ssantai	ssasai	ssawhai	ssan	ssamhai."
	ssa	ssantu	ssai	ssahtha	ssan	ssamha
	ssahta	ssesu	ssasai	ssawhai	ssan	ssamhasai."

\* These are technical terms, afterwards used in the work.

No paradigm is given, but the above rules contain all the terminations of the verb, in the order of third, second and first persons singular and plural; the first three pair under each tense belonging to the active, and the last three to the passive voice. No distinction is recognised between mood and tense. Other rules follow, in which it is taught, that certain classes of words take certain letters between the root and the terminations; which is equivalent to an arrangement for different conjugations. The remainder of the volume treats of the changes which take place in the final vowel of the root, on receiving accession; on the formation of nominal, optative and causal verbs; and on the various exceptions to the rules, among which is a class of verbs, that, in conjugation, reduplicate the first syllable of the root. The whole of the original work is a very moderate-sized book; and, excepting that the arrangement is sufficiently quaint, would be easily understood; but it has always been studied by the Burmans through a commentary, eight or ten times larger than the original text. In the commentary, reference is made to the rules as axioms, and every example worked out in a most logical manner, wanting nothing but "quod erat demonstrandum," at the close, to bring us back to the days and works of Euclid. For example, a rule in the volume on permutations requires, that when *ete* is followed by a vowel, it is to be written *ettsa*, and the example given to illustrate the rule is, *ete*, *thus*, followed by *aitan*, *this*, which are found written *ettsaitan*. The commentator says, "*ettsaitan* is the same as *ete aitan*. Destroy *t*, and write it under the line.<sup>1</sup> Follow the rule which says, 'a vowel is destroyed on account of a vowel;' and by the occasional rule, that '*e* goes into *y* sometimes,' the last *ai* being the last vowel, the preceding vowel *e* destroy<sup>2</sup> and make *y*.<sup>3</sup> Unite *t* and *y*.<sup>4</sup> Follow the rule which says, 'for *t* compounded with another consonant, and followed by a vowel, write *ts*.'<sup>5</sup> By the rule concerning double consonants, double *ts*.<sup>6</sup> Unite the two.<sup>7</sup> Unite the other letters.<sup>8</sup>"

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The student is required to write out the words at every step, as below.

<sup>1</sup> e e aitan

t

<sup>3</sup> e y aitan

t

<sup>5</sup> e ts aitan

<sup>7</sup> e tsts aitan

<sup>2</sup> e aitan

t

<sup>4</sup> e ty aitan

<sup>6</sup> e ts aitan

ts

<sup>8</sup> ettsaitan



There is also a native dictionary of the language, written in Pali verse, in which the words are not arranged alphabetically, but under different subjects, and which has some advantages over the alphabetical method, all the synonyms being placed together, amounting, in some instances, to twenty or thirty.

Pali and Sanscrit words are evidently of common origin, but the grammars are materially different. The nine Sanscrit letters represented by *rē*, *rē*, *hē*, *hē*, *oi*, *ow*, *āh*, *shā*, and *ksha*, are wholly wanting in Pali. The dual number, which is found in Sanscrit, has no existence in Pali. Pali verbs have no middle voice, no precativè or subjunctive moods, all of which are found in Sanscrit. They have but one form of the future tense, while Sanscrit verbs have two; and the perfect tense takes no reduplication, as in Sanscrit, but with the two imperfect tenses takes an augment. Pali, like Sanscrit, is unquestionably a dialect of some common language, which has given origin to all the languages of Europe. Strong resemblances are found in both the lexicons and grammars of the languages. One declension of nouns increases in oblique cases, precisely like the third declension in Latin. The personal pronouns are nearly the same, some of their oblique cases having two forms, one of which coincides with the Latin, and the other with the Greek. Some of the tense terminations are like the Greek, and, like that, they resolve themselves into two classes, the present, perfect and future following one analogy, and the historical tenses another.

The confusion of tongues is the greatest curse which has come upon man since the fall, offering, as it does, such an obstacle to the spread of the gospel. The present age, however, is distinguished by a spirit of philological research, which bids fair to mitigate, if not remove it. Languages are now traced to their sources; they are resolved into families, their common principles developed, and thus their study facilitated. The whole tendencies of things seem to hasten the development of the great event before us,—the world's redemption. Difficulties in the acquisition of languages are not only removed, but the languages themselves are decreasing. It is believed, that the history of languages would fully prove, that they have long since passed their point of increase, and that they are fast reverting to that primitive state of things, when "the whole earth was of one language and one speech." The people around the writer once had a language, of which nothing but

ruins now remains. Peguan, in the adjoining province, is fast passing to oblivion, and Pali is already among "the things that were." The mechanic is contributing his steamboats and railroads to bring the ends of the earth near; the savans of Europe and the philologists of India are opening the avenues of thought between the inhabitants of the isles and the sons of Sinim; and it now only remains for the church to arise in the greatness of her strength, and, lifting up her arm to heaven, with one foot on the earth, and the other on the sea, "to swear by him that liveth for ever and ever," that idolatry shall be no more.

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#### ARTICLE IV.

##### MRS. HEMANS.

*Memorials of Mrs. HEMANS.* By H. F. CHORLEY. Philadelphia. 12mo. pp. 273. 1836.

*The Poetical Works of Mrs. FELICIA HEMANS, complete in one volume.* Philadelphia. 8vo. pp. 444. 1836.

A GOOD biography is by no means a common book. Of works which have for their object to relate the lives and deeds of the departed, there is surely no lack. They constitute almost the largest and most popular portion of the current literature of the times. But of books which present a full and fair portraiture of character, that show forth their subject with just and skilful discrimination of light and shade, and make the person live to after times on their pictured pages, the supply is by no means large. Indeed, we have been disappointed in so many of the memoirs of the great and good, which we have lately read, that we have almost ceased to cherish any high expectation of a new biographical sketch that may be announced, especially if it come from a writer whose power has not already been fully tried. The mediocrity and dulness which pervade many of the recent specimens of this species of literature, have arisen, in no small degree, from the bad practice, now so common, of making a person's biography consist almost entirely of selections from his correspondence

and his published works. According to the prevailing practice, the preparation of memoirs is little else than the cutting up and sewing together of the papers which may be found in a man's bureau after he has left the world,—a mere matter for the scissors and the needle, in which the pen does little, and the mind almost nothing at all. It has become a species of authorship, which writers of almost every grade have not feared to undertake; and the result is, as might be expected, multitudes utterly fail of success, materials are wasted, and many a character, that deserves to live in the remembrance of men, is doomed to the oblivion of an unsaleable and soon-to-be-forgotten book. We are heartily wearied of biographies, in which we are told, that the writer has left the person to speak for himself,—this is the cant of it,—and in which, instead of being invited to gaze upon the character stamped upon the successive pages that we read, we are doomed to hunt for it through the labyrinth of a correspondence which is often trifling and unimportant, and almost invariably grows tedious, long ere we have reached the end. We feel as though the author had occasioned us too much trouble, especially when we reflect, that a few strokes of a master's pencil might have set the character vividly before us, and portrayed to us the scenes and circumstances from which it received its shape and complexion.

That correspondence should not be made use of at all, we are far from saying. We believe it should; for it often bodies forth, far more beautifully and impressively than any other memorial can, the inner and deepest spirit of the man. What we complain of is, that it is used too much, and therefore abused; that, instead of being woven into the work, to give variety and character to the narration, it takes the place of narration. This, if we mistake not, has been particularly true of many of the religious biographies which, within a few years, have been given to the public. In how many of them does the reader run through page after page of journals and letters, and yet gain no clear conception of the characters they are employed to portray! The correspondence is sometimes interesting. The fault is not always chargeable to this. It is far more frequently to be ascribed to unskilfulness and want of judgment on the part of the biographer. He employs letters for purposes which they were never designed to accomplish,—purposes which can be accomplished only by the sketches of his own pen.

We have been led into these remarks, by a recollection of the oft-repeated disappointment we have experienced in the reading of recently published biographies, and by finding this disappointment renewed by these "*Memorials of Mrs. Hemans.*" It is true, Mr. Chorley did not aim at a regular biography. The task he proposed to himself was, to illustrate the changes of her genius, to trace the progress of her mind through the several stages of her literary career,—an aim in every way deserving of respect, and one to which Mr. Chorley may be fully equal, but which, in the work before us, he has certainly failed to accomplish. He has erred in supposing, that the changes of Mrs. Hemans' mind are best illustrated by selections from her correspondence, with so little of personal narration as he has chosen to connect with them. And hence we read it through, feeling, as we close the volume, that we know little more of the gifted lady to whom it relates, than when we began it. The questions which almost every mind entertains concerning the development of her character, and the sources and limits of her poetic power, are but imperfectly answered. The admirers of Mrs. Hemans, among whom we claim a humble place, will feel themselves but slightly indebted to Mr. Chorley for these "*Memorials.*" Indeed, we are surprised, that, with the opportunities for personal intercourse which he seems to have enjoyed, the materials he had gathered, and the agreeable powers of style of which he has given proof, the editor should have done no more towards making us acquainted with the genius of one, to whose sweet minstrelsy the world has so long delighted to listen.

We intend, in this article, to present an outline of the life of this daughter of song, so far as we can gather it from Mr. Chorley's book, and afterwards to notice some of the leading features of her poetry.

Mrs. Hemans was born in Liverpool, in 1794. Her maiden name was Felicia Dorothea Browne. Her father was a native of Ireland, and her mother was a descendant of an ancient Venetian family. A romantic fancy and a passion for the beautiful seem to have been among the earliest developments of her mind. These qualities were, doubtless, not a little strengthened by the peculiarities of her education, and by the scenery of Wales, to one of the northern counties of which her father removed, in the fifth year of her life. Here, amidst the wildness of nature, in an old mansion, of which tradition told



many a strange legend, with rough rocks, and craggy hills, and "the dark blue sea," for her constant prospect, she passed those years which usually give so decided a tinge to subsequent character. Her early education seems to have been little else than a desultory reading of such books as her own taste selected, or her friends recommended for her perusal. Mr. Chorley says, "She was never at school; had she been sent to one, she might, probably, have run away; and I am told, that the only things she was ever regularly taught, were French, English grammar, and the rudiments of Latin, communicated to her by a gentleman, who used to deplore, 'that she was not a man, to have borne away the highest honors at college.' Occasionally, too, she may have been benefited by a passing glimpse of some gifted person. One hour of such an angel visit does more to unfold and assist the mind, at that time of life, when the spirit is almost tumultuously awake, than days, months of intercourse, at a period of sober age and experience." We cannot but consider an education, gathered thus at random, as having been injurious to the full vigor of her poetic power. While it gave an early activity to her imagination, and imparted quickness and delicacy to her sensibility, it must have unfitted her mind for those just and varied perceptions of truth, which, after all, must be the staple of true poetry, and failed to form those habits of steadfastness and perseverance, which are always required for the production of any great work. That these bad results are not more apparent than they are, in the history of Mrs. Hemans, must be ascribed to the influence of the peculiar circumstances of her life, and the efforts which she made in her womanhood to supply the deficiencies of her training when a child.

Her first attempts at verse were made at a very early age, and seem to have been founded on the books she read, the anecdotes that were related to her, or the incidents she met in her own daily path. Of two volumes of her early poetry, the first was published in 1808, when its author was 14 years of age, and the second in 1812, when she was 18. It was upon the second of these volumes that was bestowed almost the only severity of criticism which Mrs. Hemans was ever called to experience. The poems must have fallen into the hands of an unlenient critic, and were doubtless judged without reference to their author's age, and by too high a standard; for we suspect, there are few in either volume that might not bear favor-

able comparison with the earliest productions of almost any poet. That they gave promise of the power which their author afterwards so fully exhibited, can hardly be asserted; yet we think, few have read them without perceiving in their versification a more than common delicacy and harmony.

Of her marriage to Capt. Hemans, Mr. Chorley makes no other mention, than that it occurred in 1812, and was terminated about the time of the birth of a fifth son, by a protracted separation. Of the cause and the history of the domestic sorrow here alluded to, very little is known on this side of the Atlantic. The rumors that have reached us, have tended to awaken our sympathy in Mrs. Hemans' character, and strengthen our interest in her works and in her fame; but they have all been too vague and uncertain to be admitted to our credence. We only know, that her marriage was unhappy, and that the care of her family and the education of her sons rested upon her alone. For ourselves, we are not eager to know the private afflictions of our favorite writers, except so far as they have moulded their character, or stamped themselves upon the productions of their genius. Yet, when the period shall arrive, when a full biography of Mrs. Hemans may be properly given to the public, we shall take a melancholy interest in a record of the sorrows to which we trace here and there a dim allusion in the plaintive lines of her poetry.

The name of Felicia Hemans was now becoming gradually known to the English public, by the charming notes which were every year poured from her lyre. The works which, at this early period, did most to give her reputation, were, "The Restoration of the Works of Art to Italy," "Modern Greece," and "Tales and Historic Scenes in verse," all which were published from 1816 to 1819. "The Skeptic," the only strictly didactic poem found among her works, appeared in 1820. One of the earliest of her literary acquaintances was Bishop Heber, who cherished a high respect for her powers, and through his life continued to be her adviser in many of her literary undertakings. It was at his suggestion, that "The Vespers of Palermo," the first of her dramatic pieces, was begun and published in 1821. These were the works on which her early reputation was built; and though they bear the marks of youthful taste, and many of them seem the exercises on which she was practising her powers, rather than the embodying of the bright and lofty ideal that afterwards reigned

in her mind, yet they possessed merit enough to send abroad her name, "as a word of promise," through the English world.

From the volume before us it appears, that Mrs. Hemans held correspondence with nearly all the distinguished contemporary writers of her own sex, and with not a few of the highest names in literature on both sides of the Atlantic. The letters which are presented are often interesting, yet few of them are eminently characteristic. They seldom introduce us to a familiar knowledge of her personal or literary character. Poets have usually been good writers of letters. There is a sympathy between the powers which these two forms of composition demand, that makes excellence in the one almost insure success in the other. The poet looks at all outward things in those attitudes which best suit the purposes of the familiar epistolary style. Mrs. Hemans, though by no means deficient in epistolary power, yet did not possess it in so high a degree as we should expect in a poet so distinguished for the sweetness and harmony of her diction. The letters contained in these Memorials are often distinguished by justness of remark and beauty of expression; but there is wanting through them the "unbought grace," the undefinable charm, which holds us for ever unwearied over the letters of Burns or Cowper, and bears us, without loss of patience, through the protracted correspondence of Hannah More. The best, as it seems to us, are those addressed to Joanna Baillie and to Miss Jewsbury, and those written while away from home to the members of her family, in which she describes her visits to Wordsworth and Sir Walter Scott. They are expressions of warm and delicate affection, and contain here and there a paragraph of fine and glowing description.

We extract the following passages as favorable specimens of her manner in this species of composition. The first is from a letter written from Chiefswood, the residence of Col. Hamilton, in Scotland:

"Whether I shall return to you all 'brighter and happier,' as your letter so kindly prophesies, I know not; but I think there is every prospect of my returning more fitful and wilful than ever; for here I am leading my own free native life of the hills again; and if I could but bring some of my friends, as the old ballad says, 'near, near, near me,' I should indeed enjoy it; but that strange, solitary feeling, which I cannot chase away, comes over me too often, like a dark, sudden shadow, bringing with it an utter indifference to all around. I lose it most frequently, however, in the excitement of Sir Walter Scott's society. And with him I am now in constant intercourse, taking long walks over moor and woodland, and listening to song

and legend of other times, until my mind quite forgets itself, and is carried wholly back to the days of the Slogan and the fiery cross, and the wild gatherings of border chivalry. I cannot say enough of his cordial kindness to me; it makes me feel, when at Abbotsford, as if the stately rooms of the proud, ancestral-looking place, were old, familiar scenes to me. Yesterday, he made a party to show me the 'pleasant banks of Yarrow,' about ten miles from hence; I went with him in an open carriage, and the day was lovely, smiling upon us with a *real blue*, sunny sky; and we passed through I know not how many storied spots, and the spirit of the master mind seemed to call up sudden pictures from every knoll and cairn, as we went by, so vivid were his descriptions of the things that had been. The names of some of those scenes had, to be sure, rather savage sounds; such as, '*Slain Man's Lea*,' '*Dead Man's Pool*,' &c.; but I do not know whether these strange titles did not throw a deeper interest over woods and waters now so brightly peaceful. . . . It was all like a dream. Do you remember Wordsworth's beautiful poem, 'Yarrow visited?' I was ready to exclaim, in its opening words, 'And is this Yarrow?' There was nothing to disturb the deep and solemn loneliness of the scenery; no *rose-colored* spencers, such as persecuted the unhappy Count Forbin amidst the pyramids. Mr. Hamilton, and Mrs. Lockhart, and the boys, who followed us, were our whole party; and the sight of shepherds,—real, not Arcadian shepherds,—sleeping under their plaids, to shelter from the noon-day, carried me at once into the heart of a pastoral and mountain country. We visited Newark tower, where, amongst other objects that awakened many thoughts, I found the name of Mungo Park (who was a native of the Yarrow vale), which he had inscribed himself, shortly before leaving his own bright river, never to return. We came back to Abbotsford, where we were to pass the remainder of the day, partly along the Ettrick, and partly *through* the Tweed; on the way, we were talking of trees, in his love for which Sir Walter is a perfect Evelyn."—*Memorials*, pp. 143, 144.

The other passage which we have selected was written a year later, from "Rydal Mount," during a visit to the country of the Lakes, the residence of the poet Wordsworth:

"I seem to be writing to you almost from the spirit land; all is here so brightly still, so remote from every day cares and tumults, that sometimes I can hardly persuade myself I am not dreaming. It scarcely seems to be 'the light of common day,' that is clothing the woody mountains before me; there is something almost *visionary* in its soft gleams and ever-changing shadows. I am charmed with Mr. Wordsworth, whose kindness to me has quite a soothing influence over my spirits. Oh, what relief, what blessing, there is in the feeling of admiration, when it can be freely poured forth! 'There is a daily beauty in his life,' which is in such lovely harmony with his poetry, that I am thankful to have witnessed and *felt* it. He gives me a good deal of his society, reads to me, walks with me, leads my pony when I ride, and I begin to talk with him as with a sort of *paternal* friend. The whole of this morning he kindly passed



in reading to me a great deal from Spenser, and afterwards his own 'Laodamia,' my favorite 'Tintern Abbey,' and many of those noble sonnets which you, like myself, enjoy so much. His reading is very peculiar, but, to my ear, delightful; slow, solemn, *earnest* in expression, more than I have ever heard. When he reads or recites in the open air, his deep, rich tones seem to proceed from a spirit voice, and belong to the religion of the place; they harmonize so fitly with the thrilling tones of woods and waterfalls. His expressions are often strikingly poetical: 'I would not give up the mists that *spiritualize* our mountains, for all the blue skies of Italy.' Yesterday evening, he walked beside me as I rode on a long and lovely mountain path, high above Grasmere lake; I was much interested by his showing me, carved deep into the rock, as we passed, the initials of his wife's name, inscribed there, many years ago, by himself; and the dear old man, like 'Old Mortality,' renews them from time to time; I could scarcely help exclaiming, '*Esto perpetua.*'—*Memorials*, pp. 174, 175.

In the autumn of the year 1828, Mrs. Hemans left St. Asaph's, which had long been her residence in Wales, and established herself at Wavertree, a pleasant village near Liverpool. Her object in this removal was to secure superior advantages for the education of her sons, and the intercourse of cultivated and congenial society for herself. With respect to neither of these, however, were her expectations realized. The schools of Liverpool, at this period, were none of them distinguished; and its society, distracted by petty sects, and pervaded by the spirit which usually reigns in a purely commercial town, seems to have presented but few attractions for one whose choicest communings were with minds of ethereal mould. Indeed, she seems, at no period of her life, to have had a strong relish for general society. Her principal social delights were found in the companionship of a kindred few, with whom, away from the tumults of the world, she might listen to its thousand voices, and commune of all its mysteries. To shine as a star in the circles of England's commercial metropolis, was never an object of her ambition. The crowded hall and the magnificent banquet were as little adapted to call forth her powers, as they were to gratify her tastes. She preferred to shed the light of her cheerful and varied genius around the familiar firesides of her chosen friends, or to pour the warm affections of her maternal heart over the endeared objects of her own home. She continued to reside at Wavertree for three years, and then removed to Dublin, where she passed the remainder of her days.

Mrs. Hemans was now in the maturity of her powers and

the meridian of her fame. The volumes which she had given to the public had gone widely abroad, her longer pieces had been noticed and praised in many of the leading periodicals, and, what did more than aught else to awaken an interest in her name, many of her lyrics had become favorite songs in the happy homes of England and America. She had come forth from the obscurity of her retreat in Wales, where she had passed her earlier days, and was now settled near a metropolis, in which she would naturally be an object of public attention and regard. Along with many gratifying results of literary fame, she was obliged to endure, while at Wavertree, a full share of the troublesome attentions and visits of curiosity, with which a distinguished author, and especially a poet, is almost sure to be persecuted. Her days were often consumed by visits from strangers; sometimes, indeed, from persons whose acquaintance was worth the forming, but far more often from those who go abroad to see the world, and who think themselves entitled to look upon every person and thing it contains. Her parlor was almost daily frequented by visitors of this description,—young gentlemen, who came to pay their respects and leave their sonnets, and young ladies, who brought their albums and their boarding-school verses.

Often interrupted by such intrusions upon her retirement, and obliged to give a large portion of her time to her domestic concerns, which now rested upon her alone, the period of her residence near Liverpool seems not to have been marked either by happiness or by literary labor. In the summer of 1829, she made a visit to Scotland, where she was received in a manner the most respectful and highly gratifying to the feelings of a delicate mind. In this excursion, she saw much of the impressive scenery and many of the illustrious personages of the north, and made the visit to Sir Walter Scott, to which allusion has already been made.

Wordsworth was, at this period, just receiving the universal acknowledgment of that fame which is now so well established, and on which he seems to be reposing the weary powers of his advanced age. His poetry had long been the favorite study of Mrs. Hemans, and had wrought, slowly and almost imperceptibly, a change in her taste and the reigning spirit of her mind. She had listened, delighted, to his lay, as it poured forth "the still, sad music of humanity," and had felt a quickening of her own sympathies with the living world and all the

good which it contains. She admired Mr. Wordsworth, too, not only as a poet, but as a man deeply skilled in the philosophy of life,—who felt delicately and generously,—whose views were sober, yet liberal and elevated,—and in whose character, far more than is common with poets, was embodied the fair and pure ideal his fancy had created. It was, therefore, with high anticipations, that she made an excursion to the Lakes, in the summer of 1830, for the purpose of recruiting her health, and enjoying a personal interview with one for whom she had long cherished a deep and fervent admiration. On her return from this visit, she came to the determination to leave Wavertree,—a village to which she had never been strongly attached,—and remove to Dublin, at that time the residence of some of her friends. She left England for the last time, in the spring of 1831. The four years of her residence in Dublin, though the last she spent on earth, seem to have been among the happiest portions of her life. Though from these Memorials we are able to form only a faint idea of the moral changes which came over Mrs. Hemans' mind, yet, from the imperfect revealings that are given of her employments during this period, and from the character of her later productions, we are led to infer, that her spirit, during these last years of her history, more than ever before, was strengthened and elevated by the influences of piety. A life filled with care and checkered with sorrow had impressed upon her its sober lessons, and taught her to seek for happiness at other fountains than those which had been the resort of her earlier days. The speculative habits and somewhat wayward impulses, which seem to have marked her youth, yielded to the power of an exalted faith in the truths of religion; and we think of her, at this period of her life, as reposing, with elevated trust, in the hopes of the gospel, and shedding around her the light of a piety grown brighter by the sorrows through which she had passed.

The life of this amiable poet was drawing to a close. While recovering from an attack of scarlet fever, she took a sudden cold, accompanied with ague, which fastened upon her constitution the disease that hurried her to the tomb. There is something beautiful and touching in the attitude of a gifted and pious spirit, as it stands on the utmost verge of life. The position is an elevated and commanding one. The soul, with large discourse, may look from it, back over the changes of its earthly existence, and onward far into the vistas of eternity.

Its visions seem then to be made clearer by the brightness of an unearthly light. It is often thus, when half released from its prison-house, and sending its glances into the unseen world which lies around it, that it utters oracles of the most touching beauty and the deepest moral significance. Earth has no object of more impressive loveliness than a gifted and far-sighted mind thus staying itself on the hopes of immortality, and gazing at the visions which are opening before it, as it waits the approach of the inevitable hour. The triumphs of genius lose their importance, by the side of the victories of Christian faith; and the revealings of the soul are never brighter than when they come from the mysterious confines of eternity. There is something of this beauty lingering about the latest days of Mrs. Hemans, shedding a lustre over the scenes she is about to leave for ever. It inspires in us a new interest in her character, and makes us love to linger around every memorial which illustrates her closing career. She died on the evening of the 16th of May, 1835, at Dublin, in the forty-first year of her age, in the full maturity of her usefulness and her fame, and has left a family of five sons, one of whom is now in this country, and receiving his education at a New-England college.

To Mrs. Hemans was unquestionably given a large measure of that power which Wordsworth has called the "vision and the faculty divine," and which constitutes the leading characteristic of the true poet. She has put forth the efforts of her mind in a great variety of productions; and in none can it be said, that she has failed. It is true, her dramas are made rather for the closet than for the public stage. But we are not of those who think, that the only use of the drama is to wake the shouts of the theatre, or minister to the idle amusement of fashionable life. We believe it has a higher use, and one, too, which will continue after the theatre has ceased to be the resort of cultivated society. It paints character and utters passion,—it expresses the spirit of great deeds, and pictures forth the outlines of glorious eras,—it teaches lessons of history, of human nature and divine providence, even though it never march its stately procession across the stage, or chant its lofty iambics in the ear of an applauding people. We cannot, therefore, agree with those who pronounce the dramas of Mrs. Hemans failures, because they are not adapted to representation. On the other hand, that they are high specimens of tragedy, we are far from asserting. It is enough for us, that



they stir our hearts as we read them, that they render more vivid our conceptions of the periods to which they relate, that they create in our minds images of beauty and goodness, which dwell there, and become, as it were, parts of our own being.

Of her larger and more labored productions, "The Skeptic" and "The Forest Sanctuary" are the two with which we are best pleased. The former belongs to that class of her poems which illustrate her earlier taste, while the latter expresses the sentiments of her mind after it had been enriched and elevated by the contemplation of loftier models. In the "Skeptic," there is no attempt at argument. Its aim is rather to picture a mind which has broken away from the influences of Christian faith, wandering over a barren and desolate life, thirsting for what earth can never supply, and perishing at last with its wants unsatisfied, and its cravings all unquenched. The description is true to man's moral nature, and none can read it without feeling, that earth has sadder and more awful ruins than mouldering temples, and "regal cities," and all the wrecks of ancient grandeur; that

"one lost mind,  
Whose star is quenched, hath lessons for mankind  
Of deeper import than each prostrate dome,  
Mingling its marble with the dust of Rome."

The "Forest Sanctuary" seems to have been the favorite production of its amiable and accomplished author. Its incidents were suggested by the history of a Spaniard, who, flying from the religious persecutions with which his country was cursed in the sixteenth century, at length finds a resting-place in the forests of North America. It beautifully embodies the strong and rich associations by which a generous spirit is bound to his native land,—the proud memories of the ancient chivalry of Spain,—the influences that come from its romantic scenery and time-hallowed monuments, from its gorgeous festivals and old superstitions. From all these, and from his "blessed household joys," the wanderer tears himself away, and seeks a free home in the far forest, where he is made to recite the sad story of his griefs. In this poem, before all others, Mrs. Hemans gives the most striking proofs of her power in tracing the subtle analogies which subsist between matter and mind, and in showing forth the mysterious influences that outward objects and events exert upon the spirit of man. The mental conflicts and sacrifices of the hero, his deep and melancholy

questionings of all things around him, his fond and fervent yearnings over the past and the future, all are witnesses, that she had been no careless observer of those workings of human nature, which must always furnish the richest materials for moral poetry. The following lines,—the language of the hero as he describes the storm of furious passion from which he fled,—contain truths, that commend themselves to every mind which has reflected upon the changes of our being :

“There are swift hours in life,—strong, rushing hours,  
That do the work of tempests in their might!  
They shake down things that stood as rocks and towers  
Unto th’ undoubting mind; they pour in light  
Where it but startles, like a burst of day,  
For which th’ uprooting of an oak makes way;  
They sweep the coloring mists from off our sight;  
They touch with fire thought’s graven page, the roll  
Stamped with past years, and lo! it shrivels as a scroll.”

The deep mystery of life rests heavily upon the wanderer’s mind; he asks its solution of all that he sees around him; but he hears no response, till he finds it in the hopes and assurances of religion. The first vision of Christian faith, as it opens upon his troubled spirit, is finely exhibited in the following stanzas :

“*Thy* form, thou Son of God!—a wrathful deep,  
With foam, and cloud, and tempest, round thee spread,  
And such a weight of night!—a night when sleep  
From the fierce rocking of the billows fled.  
A bark showed dim beyond thee, with its mast  
Bowed, and its rent sail shivering to the blast;  
But, like a spirit in thy gliding tread,  
Thou, as o’er glass, didst walk that stormy sea,  
Through rushing winds, which left a silent path for thee!

So still thy white robes fell! no breath of air  
Within their long and slumberous folds had sway!  
So still the waves of parted, shadowy hair  
From thy clear brow flowed droopingly away!  
Dark were the heavens above thee, Saviour!—dark  
The gulfs, Deliverer! round the straining bark;  
But thou!—o’er all thine aspect and array  
Was poured one stream of pale, broad silvery light;—  
Thou wert the single star of that all-shrouding night!”

But we are far from thinking her long pieces the best specimens of her powers. It cannot be denied, that in many of them there is a uniformity of versification, and an uninterrupted brilliancy of expression, which give to them something of the

effect of monotony. It is to her shorter poems, and especially to her lyrics, that we should point, as the happiest effusions of her muse. Many of these have long since received a place among those gems of the English language which are worthy to be held in everlasting remembrance. The "Captive Knight," "The Hour of Prayer," "The Pilgrim Fathers," "The Spirit's Return," "The Messenger Bird," have become household songs throughout the English world. They are known and admired almost wherever a taste for beautiful poetry and a love for the glories of song can be found. No lyric poet of the age has produced so many popular pieces as Mrs. Hemans. This, in the judgment of those who have felt the power of lyric verse, will be considered no trifling distinction; for who exerts a wider influence than she who writes the songs which are sung around a thousand firesides, and that wake the spirit of love and devotion in a multitude of human hearts?

The poetry of Mrs. Hemans addresses itself with most power to serious and reflective minds; and in these it aims to wake the best feelings of which they are capable. It is seldom gloomy, yet it often has a melancholy blended with its exquisite beauty, which touches our deepest sympathies. She "learnt in suffering what she taught in verse;" and hence the character of that verse was tinged by the incidents which had marked her life. It was amid lone thoughts, and sad recollections, and darkened hopes, mingled with the associations of friendship and the firm supports of piety, that her spirit gathered strength for its heavenward flight of song. To paint the lily and the rosebud, to describe scenes of all promise and gaiety, to sing the songs of mirth for the bridal feast, was not the task best fitted to her peculiar powers. She preferred rather to steal away, and hearken to the notes of the more plaintive music, which rises from the thousand conditions of sorrowing and afflicted life. But not around these alone does she linger. She loves to visit and describe all the scenes upon which are gathered pure sentiments and holy associations. Before all other spots, the fireside, with its mingled joys and griefs, with its rich affections and glowing hopes,—around which are gathered devoted kindred and loving friends,—where infancy prattles its first lessons of knowledge, and age breathes its latest blessing of parental love;—it is this which has furnished the themes on which she most delighted to exert her genius. It is a beautiful characteristic of her poetry, that it keeps alive in

the mind its homebred affections, and spreads over the cares and labors of our later days the freshness and verdure of youthful feeling. Over all its pictures of human life are thrown the charms of an exquisite grace and beauty, which could emanate only from a mind that is the home of all that is true, and generous, and pure. All that has come from her pen is in the chastest and purest taste; there is nothing gross, nothing unfeminine. It is all such as a good and gifted woman only could have written. Though influenced, at different periods, by the works of different writers, yet she cannot be said to have followed any as a model. The path to fame, which she has trodden, is one of her own finding. In the selection both of the topics and the style of her works, she was guided by her own taste; and the clear streams of her poetry flowed forth from the fountains of her own nature.

Her contributions to the religious poetry of our literature have twined with her memory the respect and affection of the Christian public. Many of her hymns and scripture sonnets take rank among the finest specimens of this kind of poetry of which our language can boast. We select the "Sabbath Sonnet," which appeared first in *Blackwood's Magazine* in July, 1835, a few weeks after her death. It is by no means the best, yet it possesses a melancholy interest to every mind, as being the last strain that flowed from that fountain of song, ere it was sealed up for ever:

"How many blessed groups this hour are bending,  
Through England's primrose meadow paths, their way  
Toward spire and tower, midst shadowy elms ascending,  
Whence the sweet chimes proclaim the hallowed day!  
The halls, from old heroic ages gray,  
Pour their fair children forth; and hamlets low,  
With whose thick orchard-blooms the soft winds play,  
Send out their inmates in a happy flow,  
Like a freed vernal stream. I may not tread  
With them those pathways,—to the feverish bed  
Of sickness bound;—yet, O, my God! I bless  
Thy mercy, that with Sabbath peace hath filled  
My chastened heart, and all its throbbings stilled  
To one deep calm of lowliest thankfulness."

It was an aspiration, which she fondly cherished, to enlarge the domain of sacred poetry, "by associating with its themes more of the emotions, the affections, and even the pure imaginative enjoyments of daily life, than had hitherto been admitted within the hallowed circle." The aim was an elevated and



noble one ; and in its accomplishment she certainly has not wholly failed of success. Yet how much more remains to be done ! How much further might its sphere be widened, and its power increased, by one whom heaven had gifted with an eye to discern the poetic beauty, and a heart to feel the moral meaning, which are so mysteriously blended in the changeful scenes around us ! The sacred bard performs no higher office than when he teaches us to mingle the sentiments of piety with the incidents and objects which present themselves along the familiar pathway of common life.

Among the female writers of the age, the place of Mrs. Hemans is a high one. There may be others who have excelled her in single departments, or in particular qualities of poetry ; but we know not where to look for one, who has attained a wider influence over her own sex, or made a deeper or more lasting impression upon the general mind of the age. The place in our literature which she has left vacant, is yet unfilled. Critics have sometimes expressed a regret, which seems also to have been deeply felt by herself, that she did not, to use her own words, "concentrate all her mental energy in the production of some more noble and complete work, something of pure and holy excellence (if there be not too much presumption in the thought), which might permanently take its place as the work of a British poetess." "It has ever been one of my regrets," she says, in one of her latest letters, "that the constant necessity of providing sums of money to meet the exigences of the boys' education, has obliged me to waste my mind in what I consider mere desultory effusions ;

'Pouring myself away,  
As a wild bird, amid the foliage, turns  
That which within him thrills, and beats, and burns,  
Into a fleeting lay.'

But though we sympathize with the amiable feeling which is thus uttered, and honor the aspiration from which it springs, yet we can hardly believe, that her vocation as a poet would have been better accomplished, had she devoted her energies to a single work. There are minds, whose powers are best exerted, not so much in soaring to "the brightest heaven of invention," as in pointing out the calm and sunny spots of earth, the delightful retreats to which the pilgrim of life may resort and be refreshed, amid the toils and tumults of his pilgrimage. It is this office which Mrs. Hemans has performed,

and for which we think her genius, both by nature and by the circumstances of her life, was admirably fitted. It is for this, and for the images of truth, and beauty, and holiness, which live in her poetry, that the world will cherish her memory. And though men may resort to other temples for the deeper oracles of poetic truth, yet will they often come to this humbler shrine, to hear the responses of simple piety, to catch the spirit of calm devotion, and learn the lessons of humble faith and cheerful resignation.

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#### ARTICLE V.

##### TRANSLATION OF ISAIAH 17: 12—18: 7, WITH A BRIEF COMMENTARY.

Lo! a tumult of many people!  
Like the raging of the sea they rage.  
A commotion of nations!  
They rush like the rushing of mighty waters,  
Like the roar of many waters the nations shout.

He rebuketh them, and they flee far away;  
They are driven like chaff of the mountains before the wind,  
Like stubble before the whirlwind.

At evening time, behold, terror!  
Before the morning they are not!

This is the portion of those who rob us,  
The fate of those who spoil us.

Ho! thou land rustling with armies!  
Bordering on the rivers of Cush,  
Which sendeth messengers over the sea,  
In boats of papyrus over the face of the waters.

Go, ye swift messengers, to a nation brave and fierce,  
To a nation terrible from the first and onward;  
A conquering, destroying nation,  
Whose land the rivers overflow.

All ye inhabitants of the world, and dwellers on the earth,  
When he lifteth up a standard on the mountains, behold!  
When he bloweth a trumpet, hear!

For thus saith Jehovah unto me:

I will sit still and behold in my dwelling-place,  
Like the clear heat when the sun is up;  
Like a cloud of dew in the heat of harvest.

For before the vintage when the flower is gone,  
And the blossom has become a ripening grape,  
He will cut off the shoots with a pruning-hook,  
The branches he will cut down and take away.

They shall be left together to the birds of the mountain,  
And to the wild beasts of the field.  
The bird of prey shall summer upon them,  
And every beast of the earth shall winter upon them.

At that time shall gifts be brought to Jehovah of hosts,  
From a nation courageous and fierce,  
From a people terrible from the first and onward;  
A conquering, destroying nation,  
Whose land the rivers overflow,  
To the dwelling-place of Jehovah of hosts,—to Mount Zion!

On what is the mind of the prophet here fixed? There is a plain correspondence between this prophecy and certain events recorded to have taken place in the time of Hezekiah, about seven hundred years before the Christian era. We turn to the history. The Assyrian king, Sennacherib, with his victorious army, is marching through Judea. Already the royal treasures have been exhausted, the temple itself has been despoiled of its gold, to satisfy the rapacious demands of the invader. But his ambition has no such limit. The whole land must submit. And why should it not? "As my hand hath found the kingdoms of the idols, whose graven images did excel those of Jerusalem and of Samaria, shall I not, as I have done unto Samaria and her idols, so do to Jerusalem and her idols?"

He sends a large detachment from his army, to summon the city to surrender. They array themselves before the walls of Jerusalem. Mark, now, their insolence, their proud boasting, their impious railing against Jehovah, to whom the Jews are looking for deliverance! They would terrify the city into submission. Foiled, however, in their aim, they withdraw, and rejoin the main body of the Assyrian army.

A new force from Ethiopia is now announced to be on its way in aid of the Jews. Sennacherib, undismayed by this intelligence, and arrogantly re-demanding, by messengers, the surrender of the city, prepares himself, as we are left to infer, to meet the coming army. Alas for the inhabitants of Jerusa-

lem, unless God, by miracle, interpose! If victorious over the auxiliary forces, the invader will return with redoubled forces, to wreak his vengeance on the unyielding city.

It is a time of perplexity and dismay at Jerusalem. They know the rage of the Assyrian; they dread his power. King and priest are clothed in sackcloth. The cry of the city goes up to heaven,—O, Lord of Hosts! God of Israel! hear all the words of Sennacherib, who hath sent to reproach the living God! Save us from his hand, that all the kingdoms of the earth may know, that thou art the Lord, even thou only!

The prayer is heard. Jerusalem is safe under the protection of the Almighty. The angel of death goes through the Assyrian camp. The host of the invader is routed. Sennacherib returns to his own country, where the swords of his own sons put an end to his life.

Such was the fate of that mighty host presented to the eye of the prophet, rolling like the waves of a tempestuous ocean, and raging against the people of the Most High. At evening, they are a "terror" to the whole land. The morning comes, and they are not! Those warriors, who laid them down to awake strong for the conflict,—see them now! their features fixed in death,—outstretched upon the ground through all the camp! the pride of that invading host cut down and withered in a night! Amazement seizes their surviving companions. They fly, "driven like chaff of the mountains before the wind; like stubble before the whirlwind."

The correspondence is complete, between the language of the prophet and the event before us, the overthrow of the Assyrian host by the destroying angel. Every point in the prophecy finds a corresponding circumstance connected with the event. Does the prophecy speak of spoilers? Behold the royal treasures exhausted, the temple despoiled of its gold. Does the prophecy speak of the rage of a tumultuous host? Behold the arrogance, the blasphemous insolence of the Assyrian army, in its march through Judea and before the walls of Jerusalem. Does the prophecy speak of those, who, a "terror" at evening, before the morning are not? Behold the Assyrian camp, as the morning light reveals the work of the destroying angel. Do they fly at the rebuke of the Almighty? Behold the remnant of that host, as they escape, panic-struck at what the morning reveals. Thus far, then, the prophecy and the history clearly coincide. The fate of the Assyrian army is a commentary on the language of the prophet.



At this point, the scene changes. What relation has the remaining part of the passage recited, to the foregoing? One fact, already alluded to, carefully viewed with the attending circumstances, will, perhaps, unlock the mystery. Tirhakah, king of Ethiopia, is advancing with his army, in aid of the Jews, against the invader. While yet at a distance, it is announced to the prophet what is to be the fate of the Assyrian army. The whole scene, yet future, is before his eye, in all the vividness of a present reality. How natural would it be, that the prophet, thus beholding the signal overthrow of the invader's army, should turn to the land from which auxiliary forces were advancing: Ho! thou land rustling with armies! The work shall be done without your aid. Thus saith Jehovah: "I will sit still and behold in my dwelling-place. Jehovah will look upon Jerusalem with an eye of favor, as when the morning sun shines serenely on the dew-wet field. Jehovah will elevate his banner on the mountains. He will blast the ripening schemes of the invader. His choice ones shall fall, as when a man lops off the branches of a vine with his pruning-knife. Let the enemy boast; let him dream of victory and of conquest; a power mightier than the Assyrian is in his camp." By an invisible hand they die. The bird of prey from the mountains hovers, and alights upon their corpses. The ravenous beasts of the field are there.

The whole passage, then, we suppose, refers to the same event, the destruction of the Assyrian army by the special interposition of the Almighty.

## ARTICLE VI.

REV. BELA JACOBS.

*Memoir of Rev. BELA JACOBS, A. M., compiled chiefly from his Letters and Journals, by his Daughter. With a Sketch of his Character.* By BARNAS SEARS, Professor of Ecclesiastical History in the Newton Theological Institution. Boston. Gould, Kendall & Lincoln. pp. 305. 1837.

WE have read this unpretending Memoir of a highly valued friend with much interest. It consists, mainly, of extracts from his diary and letters. The compiler, his affectionate daughter, has performed the service with delicacy and good taste. A brief sketch of the life and character of Mr. Jacobs will be acceptable to our readers.

He was born in Dighton, Mass., Feb. 9, 1786. His parents died when he was young, and he was left in a very destitute condition. He was placed as an apprentice to a ropemaker in Newport. He was treated with cruelty, and he left his employer. He soon entered the service of another ropemaker at Somerset, Mass., and acquired some bad habits. When he was about seventeen years of age, he became a true believer in Christ, and was baptized at Somerset, by the Rev. Joshua Bradley, of Newport. He immediately began to improve his mind, which had been greatly neglected. In the ropewalk, "he might have been seen, day after day, working with some school-book always in his bosom, ready for use at any leisure moment."—p. 14.

No account is given of the views and feelings of Mr. Jacobs, respecting his duty to preach the gospel. About 1807, his master relinquished his business, and Mr. Jacobs went to school in Warren, R. I. He afterwards studied in Wrentham, Mass., with Rev. William Williams, at that time a somewhat celebrated teacher. Mr. Jacobs remained here more than a year; and when he left the school, he was, it is said, "well fitted to enter college," according to the limited scale of requirements at that day. While at Wrentham, Mr. Jacobs "often preached." He did not enter college, though he re-

ceived "from an English gentleman of large fortune, residing on Rhode-Island, the offer of a collegiate education." He, unhappily, did not accept it. No reason is assigned for this decision, except that his health was impaired, and that the people at Somerset wished him to preach for them. Neither of these reasons, it is probable, satisfied his own mind, in subsequent years, that he had acted wisely.

He began to preach at Somerset, and, as his compensation was small, he kept a day school. He soon found the business of school-teaching incompatible with his duties as a minister. He says:

"I am inclined to wish I had never taken the school, as I believe a minister has enough and more than enough to do, without teaching; and he gets into difficulties, too, especially in a place like this, where the children have so long had their own way, and where the parents uphold them in all they do."—p. 31.

His want of preparation for his work made his labors very severe. His journal contains repeated remarks of this kind: "I have nothing more to say unto this people, and still I *must* preach." "What shall I say to this people?" "Ah! my Saturdays are days of labor and trial." "Preaching, alas! is become a task. What would God have me to do? O, may I walk uprightly!"

His people were, at the same time, ignorant, and gave him no encouragement to make any attempts to improve his mind. The following anecdote is an amusing instance of the petty annoyances to which a pastor is often subjected:

"The *sisters* of his church seem to have presumed on his youth and inexperience; as I find mention of one who called, with the appearance of having been deeply aggrieved, to complain, that the minister studied one very wicked book. On his requesting to be informed what it was, she replied, that she did not know the name, but it was something about dealing with evil spirits. The volume to which she had reference was shown her, 'Watts' Treatise on Logic,' and its character explained; but, though somewhat relieved, the good woman could not be made perfectly to understand the distinction between *logic* and *magic*."—p. 33.

He was ordained as pastor of the church at Somerset, July 5, 1809. He labored faithfully with some success, though the best part of his time was employed in keeping school. In February, 1810, he was married to Miss Sarah Sprague, of Newport. He continued at Somerset till November, 1810, when he found, that he was unable to support his family, and

he accepted a call to become the pastor of the Baptist church at Pawtuxet, R. I.

He remained in Pawtuxet between seven and eight years. He preached more than a thousand sermons, and baptized twenty individuals. But he had many trials there, and he deemed it his duty to leave that church. He removed to Cambridgeport, Mass., and on the 22d of July, 1818, he was recognised as the pastor of the First Baptist Church in Cambridge. Here he had a far larger sphere of action, and here his labors were highly useful, in advancing the prosperity of the church, and in aiding the progress of those benevolent institutions and societies, with which his residence in the vicinity of Boston brought him into connection. He toiled with great zeal and faithfulness, though he suffered much from the asthma, which, through the greater part of his pastoral life, often interrupted his labors. He had the pleasure to witness repeated revivals of religion in his congregation. In 1827, he baptized eighty-three persons. In August of that year, being exhausted with his labors, he set out on a journey for his health; but in Rockingham, Vt., his left arm was broken in several places, by the upsetting of a stage coach. He was, with some difficulty, removed to Cambridgeport, and was confined to his house for a number of weeks. His arm never fully recovered its former strength.

The following notice of the death of the late Rev. John E. Weston contains a well-deserved testimony to the worth of that excellent man:

*"Lord's day morn, July 3, 1831.—*While at breakfast, we were confounded with the awful news, that brother Weston is dead; he was drowned yesterday, while on his way to Nashua, where he was to preach. He was accompanied by his brother-in-law, Dea. B., of Lynn. They drove into a pond, for the purpose of refreshing the horse, and before they were aware of it, they were in deep water. Brother W., not knowing how to swim, sank, and rose no more. His body was found in forty minutes; but, O! the spirit had fled. Never did I more fully realize the force of the Saviour's declaration, 'Ye know not the day nor the hour, when the Son of man may come.' And never did I feel so fully the importance of taking to myself the warning of my Master, and of raising the monitory cry to all around, 'Be ye also ready.' He was very tenderly loved by all his ministering brethren, but to me he was peculiarly dear. His pastoral life had been spent in this town, as minister of the Second Church here; and we had been in habits of constant and friendly intercourse. He had just been dismissed here, and was to assume the pastoral care of another church; he was to-day to have announced to them his



compliance with their request. But his Master said to him, 'Come up higher.' He was a man of superior mind, and the most ardent piety. 'I am distressed for thee, my brother; very pleasant hast thou been unto me.'

"*July 4th.*—This day, usually devoted to mirth and festivity, has been to me filled with sorrow and heart-rending grief. I went to Lynn, to attend the funeral of my lamented friend, brother Weston. Dr. Sharp preached from Lam. 3: 33: 'The Lord doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men;' a subject well calculated to assuage the grief of an afflicted family and a large circle of mourning friends. Brother W. was but thirty-five years of age,—a man whose superior I do not know; his heart was warm with love to God, and burning with zeal to do his Master's work, and call sinners to repentance. He has left a widow and five children, to mourn their unutterable loss. O, God! be thou their Judge, their Father, and their Friend! And may I be awakened by this providence to greater diligence and devotedness to my work! I have passed the noon of life; let me work till the sun goes down, knowing, that, of a surety, the night is to me near at hand!"—pp. 203—205.

The following extract from Mr. Jacobs' diary will touch the heart of every Christian parent:

"A solemn season at the table of the Lord this afternoon. I had preached on a most affecting subject, the sufferings of our Saviour, 'Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him.' I had felt then deeply as a man, as a Christian, and as a pastor, and then, when we came around our Father's board, my feelings as a *father* were equally touched; there were three of my own dear children for the first time partaking the emblems of their Redeemer's death. My eldest was absent. O, that all these lambs may be kept in the footsteps of the flock!"—p. 219.

Notwithstanding the prosperity which attended the labors of Mr. Jacobs at Cambridgeport, and the affectionate regard which his church and congregation generally felt towards him, several circumstances, which are alluded to with a prudent brevity in the Memoir, occasioned his resignation, in May, 1833. He says:

"It was a trial, hard, very hard to bear; and with many tears I made my resolve. To this church, all my best days had been devoted; for them I would have lived, for them I would gladly have died; but it was not so to be; and God, I know, ordereth all things right."—p. 224.

He was immediately appointed the Secretary of the "Western Education Society," and he commenced an extensive journey through Vermont and New-York, to Ohio, Kentucky, Indiana, Missouri, and Illinois, for the purpose of gaining information respecting the condition and wants of the West. His letters, written during this journey, are interesting, and full

of sagacious observations. While he retained his office, he was very useful in aiding the cause of education in the western States; and his reports to the Society are valuable and instructive documents.

In August, 1835, Mr. Jacobs became the pastor of the Second Baptist Church in Cambridge. Here he labored about nine months, with untiring zeal, and with many cheering evidences, that his toils were rewarded both by the blessing of God and by the affection of his people. But on the Sabbath day, the 22d of May, 1836, he was suddenly killed, in a most awful manner. He had come, in a chaise, with Mrs. Jacobs, to the door of his meeting-house, for the purpose of preaching. The horse became frightened by the sound of the bell, ran, and dashed the chaise against the corner of a building near the meeting-house. The head of Mr. Jacobs struck against the building, his skull was fractured, and he died in about an hour. His daughter says :

"Since he had been at East Cambridge, he had been confined by sickness but two Sabbaths; during the winter of 1835-6, he had enjoyed tolerable health; but as the spring opened, he suffered considerably from frequent attacks of spasmodic asthma. The last entrance in his handwriting, in his text-book, is, 'May 15th, Sick.' During the week succeeding, he was unable to lie down, and on the morning of the 22d was quite unfit to preach; indeed, he made two ineffectual attempts to obtain a supply. When he learned the failure of the last, about twenty minutes before time for service, he smiled sadly, as he was slowly and with difficulty drawing his boots on his swollen feet, and said, 'Well, there is rest in heaven.' Had he known, that these were to be his last words at home, could he have chosen better?

"The text he had selected for the morning on which he died was, 'Enter ye in at the strait gate;' but before his lips could pronounce it in the temple dedicated to the service of God, he had himself entered the city whose 'gates shall not be shut at all,' and wherein is 'no temple; for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it.'

"The circumstances attending his death, so sudden, so strange; the place, his own church-door; the time, the morning of the Sabbath; the immediate cause, the tolling of the bell; all excited great interest in this town and its vicinity. The sympathy and kindness shown us, though not then so much valued, when we only felt crushed and stunned with our sorrow, have since been gratefully remembered.

"My father's last words were, as all his words had been, those of kindness and love. My mother recollects that he said, 'We must go over; but do n't, my dear, be frightened.' She heard then a crash, as the chaise struck the building, and when she next awoke to consciousness, we were desolate."—pp. 283—285.

Thus died this good man,—this useful minister of Christ. His deeply afflicted widow received a severe but not fatal injury, by being thrown from the chaise at the time of her husband's death. Five children survive, all but one of whom, we believe, were baptized by their lamented father. One of his children died in infancy, while he resided at Pawtuxet.

Some traits of the character and habits of Mr. Jacobs are described by his daughter, with truth and beauty, in the following paragraphs :

"My father never made any attempts towards what is technically called getting up a revival, but ever went steadily forward, imparting all the information in his power, and aiming at the gradual but constant improvement of his people in knowledge and holiness. He loved to preach, but was, I think, never more happily employed, than when teaching a Bible class. The study of the word of God was his favorite pursuit, and he rendered it attractive to others, by his simple, cheerful earnestness.

"While at East Cambridge, he took great interest in his Sabbath school, at which he was usually present; and though he did not always address the school, yet it seems to me, the calm, benevolent look, with which he watched our proceedings, was of itself sufficient to encourage both teachers and pupils in the performance of their pleasant task. As, from his connection with the Board of Foreign Missions, he possessed ample information concerning the various stations, he succeeded in exciting in the minds of his people a deeper interest in missionary operations than they had ever before felt. His was truly a missionary heart; and as he represented the toils and pleasures, the successes and disappointments, of Judson, Boardman, Wade, and others, whom he had personally known, and painted the degradation and wretchedness of the heathen world, and then drew a rapid sketch of Burmah, civilized, Christian, and elevated, his eye would kindle, and his words flow fast and warm; while his hearers felt, that to them, too, it would be a joy to bear some part in so high an enterprise."—pp. 282, 283.

"Though not an accurate writer or speaker, his preaching had always more effect on the minds of his children, than the most able efforts of any other minister. This arose from our full and perfect confidence in his sincerity and piety. The more we studied, the more we revered his character. His was not a religion sometimes worn as a bright robe, and sometimes tarnished with spots, and disfigured by rents and unsightly patches; but a garment plain and simple always, and always pure and pleasing.

"When, growing up from childhood, we sometimes remarked the inconsistencies and capriciousness of the professedly pious, and were almost ready to find fault with religion itself, which we saw so 'wounded in the house of its friends,' we were saved from this error, by contemplating the character of our father, so kind, so gentle, so cheerful; and we felt, that it was a desirable thing, to possess the religion whose effects were so lovely in him.

"There was one trait in his character, to which nothing that he wrote does justice, but which was eminently conspicuous in social intercourse. I mean his cheerfulness; whatever stiffness there might be in his writings, there was none in his conversation. At home, when perfectly at ease, he was always playful and entertaining, without effort to himself, and without becoming tedious to others. His constant cheerfulness was the more remarkable, as being exercised while under the pressure of incessant disease; and frequently has some amusing remark called a smile from those who were watching his sufferings with painful interest.

"He could, when necessary, administer reproof very forcibly; but even then, the gentleness of his nature was evinced in the manner in which it was done. Some young ladies at his house were one day talking about one of their female friends. As he entered the room, he heard the epithets, 'odd,' 'singular,' &c., applied; he asked and was told the name of the individual in question. 'Yes,' said he, gravely, 'she is an odd young lady, she is a *very* odd young lady; I consider her extremely singular;' he then added, impressively, 'she was never heard to speak ill of an absent friend.' The rebuke was not soon forgotten by those who heard it.

"He rarely punished his children; his own evident, unaffected grief at any wrong committed, was usually sufficient to deter from what was so certain to grieve one so tenderly loved. On one occasion, however, I remember a serious instance of disobedience. The children were all called into his study; and when he had, with tears, expressed his sorrow at his child's misconduct, he knelt, and putting his arm round the offending one, he implored the Father of all to forgive a child who had broken His commands by refusing to obey her mother. That child never forgot that prayer; nor would the most stubborn heart have refused to repent of a sin, punished, not in anger, but in such sorrowful affection. Penitence was expressed before leaving him, and his kiss seemed to seal her forgiveness on earth and in heaven."—pp. 286—288.

Professor Sears has given, at the close of the book, a judicious sketch of the character of Mr. Jacobs. The following paragraphs are a specimen :

"*He was a man of sound understanding.* He had no shining qualities of intellect, but possessed a large share of common sense. He was more Roman than Grecian in the order of his mind; had more practical sense than genius. Moral reasoning interested him most as an intellectual exercise; and in treating subjects of this nature, he always manifested a shrewd, discriminating mind."—p. 296.

"In the *pulpit*, it must be confessed, that with a considerable diversity of subjects, he had a sameness of manner. This defect has justly been attributed, in a great degree, to the power of an almost uninterrupted illness in cramping the natural activity of his mind.

"He was orderly, pleasing, spiritual, and, in the best sense of the word, edifying. Above all, the amiable spirit which was breathed into his discourses, the sweet accents with which they were uttered,



and the unadulterated simplicity and purity of every sentiment that dropped from his lips, enabled him to come directly to the heart, and touch the sympathies of his beloved flock.

"In our *benevolent institutions*, the influence of Mr. Jacobs was extensively felt. From the beginning, he was conscientiously their warm advocate and firm supporter. The same enlarged and correct views, which enabled him to foresee the results that we now witness, made him a wise counsellor and skilful manager. Here his worth was greatest. He was formed, by nature, to act in a deliberative body; not, indeed, to occupy the front rank, in devising and proposing measures; but he belonged to that class of men, who, though never placed at the head of affairs by any change of organization, are, for their substantial service, needed as a part of every one. The solidity of his character, and soundness of his judgment, in weighing the proposals of more elastic and brilliant minds, fitted him admirably to serve as a ballast to an agitated vessel. It is, therefore, no matter of surprise, that his name was eagerly sought, to be placed on boards of trust, and that it was steadily retained, till a mysterious providence removed him, and created a vacancy simultaneously in them all."—pp. 303—305.

A portrait of Mr. Jacobs is prefixed to the Memoir. It was, we presume, a good representation of his features at the time when it was taken.

This book well deserves to be read. It must increase, among all who knew Mr. Jacobs, their respect for his character; and those who did not know him may derive from it some useful lessons of wisdom, and some inspiring motives to serve the Lord. The candidate for the ministry ought to learn from it the importance of a thorough preparation for his work, and he ought to feel increased gratitude for the privileges which our young ministers now enjoy. The pastor who has entered on his labors with little preparation may here see, how much may be done, by well-directed industry, to supply the deficiencies of early education. While passing through sore trials, he may learn, from the example of Mr. Jacobs, how to seek strength from above, and how to bear affliction and wrong with a meek and forgiving spirit.

EDITOR.

## ARTICLE VII.

REV. GUSTAVUS F. DAVIS.

*Memoir of Rev. GUSTAVUS F. DAVIS, D. D., late Pastor of the First Baptist Church, Hartford, Ct. With six Sermons on the peculiar Sentiments of the Baptist Denomination, preached by him before his Congregation, 1834-5. By ABIGAIL L. DAVIS. Hartford. Canfield & Robins. 12mo. pp. 319. 1837.*

IT is again our melancholy duty, to take notice of a Memoir of a valued friend and successful minister of the gospel. With him, as with Mr. Jacobs, we have often enjoyed sweet counsel, and shared in harmonious labors. It is appropriate to place, in immediate connection, on our pages, a record of their names. There were, in their lives, several remarkable points of resemblance. Both were early left orphans, each declined an offer to give him a liberal education, both entered the ministry with little preparation, and both, by industry and steady perseverance, became very useful ministers, and raised themselves to a prominent position. Both were summoned into eternity in the meridian of life, in the same neighborhood, and within a short space of time.

Mr. Davis was born in Boston, March 17, 1797. His father died when he was five or six years of age. His mother removed to Roxbury, and was again married. He was sent to schools in Dedham and in Roxbury. When he was eight years of age, his parents complied with what was called the "half-way covenant," and he was "sprinkled," as he says, by Dr. Porter, the minister of the First Congregationalist Society in Roxbury, though he was then totally destitute of any just views of religion.

The following anecdotes are interesting, as early indications of qualities which were conspicuous in his character through life:

"My mother had learned me to say my prayers; I abstained from profaneness and many other vices, exhorted my companions and playmates to do the same, and began to think myself a very pious

little boy. So I understood the minister considered me; and I really had it in contemplation to request of him permission to offer the *first prayer* on the Sabbath, in the morning service. I started once or twice for that purpose, but my heart failed me, when I reached the gate to his house.

"About this time, my grandmother Davis died, and I was dressed in a full suit of black. Looking, as I thought, like a minister, I began to imitate him, and to think, that at some future period I should in reality be one. When my parents had left me to take charge of the younger children, during the hours of public worship, I frequently went through the usual formalities of reading, singing, praying, and preaching; and was much pleased with my supposed goodness. Still, as I before observed, my religious views were very absurd. For instance, my exposition of our Saviour's declaration to Nicodemus, 'Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God,' was, except a man die, and be born into another world, he cannot enter heaven. I did not duly consider the Saviour's own exposition, 'That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is *born of the Spirit* is Spirit.' O, how certain it is, that 'The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned!'"—pp. 8, 9.

When he was between nine and ten years old, his parents removed to Jonesborough, Me. Here they continued four years; and as there were no schools and no stated public worship within several miles, young Davis did not attend school, and did not hear more than three or four sermons, during these four years.

His parents afterwards removed several times. He had few opportunities of attending school; and though he occasionally had serious thoughts, yet he associated with wicked companions, and acquired vicious habits.

When he was sixteen years of age, he went to Worcester, as an apprentice to the business of chaisemaking. Here he heard a sermon by the Rev. William Bentley, which produced a deep and permanent impression on his mind; and by the blessing of God, he was soon brought to the enjoyment of a peaceful hope in the Saviour. He was baptized by Mr. Bentley, in April, 1813, and became a member of the Baptist church in Worcester.

After his baptism, he left his employer, and tried several kinds of business; but his mind was too much engrossed by the subject of preaching the gospel, to attend successfully to any thing else. He says:

"In a very few weeks, I began to have a very strong impression of duty to preach the gospel of Christ; but as I was but sixteen

years of age, and had attended school but fourteen weeks since I was ten years old, my youth, inexperience, and illiteracy, seemed to present insuperable objections to my entrance on so solemn and responsible a work. Still I could not shake off the impression.

"The command of Christ occurred with great frequency and force to my mind, 'Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.' Other passages opened to my understanding, as suitable themes of discourse; and I often imagined myself surrounded by my fellow-men, and actually engaged in proclaiming to them 'the unsearchable riches of Christ.'"—pp. 15, 16.

He met with many trials and disappointments about this time. He had offended his relatives by becoming a Baptist, and his own mother refused to permit him to remain in her house, lest he should corrupt her other children with his opinions. A conversation with his mother, at that time, led to her subsequent conversion.

He went to reside in Dedham, Mass. Here he soon began to read the Scriptures to a pious negro woman, and added a few explanatory remarks. Other persons came in on these occasions, and the meeting soon became well attended. He was invited to hold conference meetings in other places, and some persons were converted. Opposition was excited, and he was threatened with a touch of the process which has since become famous under the name of *Lynch law*:

"It was noised abroad, that the little intruder intended to establish a Baptist church in the place. I was threatened to be borne through the streets on a rail, if I did not desist from holding meetings in the village; accosted in the streets as the *Rev. negro preacher*, &c.; but I was by no means intimidated, but rather encouraged by these things. They seemed to indicate, that Satan was disturbed."—p. 21.

After a variety of disappointments, in his endeavors to learn a trade and to obtain more education, he went to Hampton, Ct., where there was a small Baptist church. Here he attended a meeting, and preached. The church, being destitute of a pastor, immediately invited him to continue to preach for them.

"I have stated already, that when I went to Hampton, I had no license or letter of approbation to preach. My minister, and some of the private members of the church to which I belonged, heard of my course, and desired that I should visit them, and consult on the subject. This I considered to be my duty, and immediately repaired to Worcester. I declared to the church my impressions and views in relation to the work of the ministry, to which I believed God had called me, and also told them, that though I did not approve of young men's preaching, in ordinary cases, without special permis-



sion from the church, yet in the circumstances under which I commenced, I could see no guilt in it. I also preached to them from Rom 1: 15, 16. The members appeared to be fully satisfied, and unanimously granted me their approbation.

"Having received my license, I returned to Hampton, and resumed my labors. But I had many conflicts. In a month or two after my return, I was tempted to believe I had committed the unpardonable sin, and sometimes resolved to return my license to the church, but was dissuaded from it by my friends. Once on the Lord's day, I arose in the congregation, and told them I had no message from God to deliver, and twice was under the necessity of sitting down without finishing discourses which I had begun to preach; but from time to time, through abounding grace, my mind was relieved, and I continued to address the people in Hampton and vicinity.

"While laboring in Hampton, I supplied the pulpit, in great part, by exchanges. My youth attracted numerous auditories, and my hearers listened to me with great apparent interest."—pp. 27—29.

He remained in Hampton till March, 1815, when he received and accepted a call from the Baptist church in Preston, Ct., to become their pastor. He was now only eighteen years of age. The compiler says:

"Mr. Davis, during his residence at Hampton, experienced much to depress his feelings, arising chiefly from his want of preparation for the ministry. And it was ever afterwards, both to himself and to many who heard him, a matter of surprise, that he was able, in any degree, to preach acceptably to the large auditories who thronged to hear him. But, however much he was favored in his public performances, his advice to young men uniformly was, not to do as he did, but to avail themselves of all the advantages placed within their power, before they commence, to any considerable extent, preaching the gospel. It is due to him, however, to remark, that no man ever sought with more eagerness the means of knowledge, and no one ever improved to better advantage those which he did enjoy."—p. 37.

Mr. Davis preached frequently and with great zeal at Preston, and a revival of religion commenced. In December, 1815, he received a letter from the Hon. Samuel Eddy, of Providence, R. I., of which the following is an extract:

"I wish you to obtain an education, that you may be more useful in the kingdom of our blessed Redeemer. Although learning will neither make a Christian nor a Christian minister, it may be useful to both. Your profession is that of a teacher; now, every thing which will enable you the better to perform this duty, certainly must be profitable. I will not, however, suppose that you have any doubt upon this subject. If there were schools for the prophets, and if those under divine inspiration, and on whom miraculous gifts were conferred, were commanded to study, surely no one can doubt the propriety of enforcing this duty on those who have neither of these gifts. In short, if you will come to Providence, you shall have

opportunity of instruction for one or two years, as may be thought best, or longer. At any rate, I think you had better come and see us soon. I warn you not to decline this opportunity, and tell you beforehand, that if you do, you will repent it as long as you live, and that, too, with increased sorrow, especially if it should be your lot to be settled with a well-informed people."—p. 46.

This generous offer was not accepted. Mr. Davis says, in relation to Mr. Eddy's proposition :

"Soon after the reception of this letter, I called at his office, with the venerable Dr. Gano. After some conversation, he offered to give me my board, and the doctor my lodgings. I was to enter the grammar school connected with Brown University. The object of my friends was, if I proved tractable, to furnish me with a collegiate education.

"Thus the door was opened for me in *Providence* to become a scholar. I gave encouragement, that in the spring I would return and accept the generous offer I had received. But the revival continued at Preston; the people remonstrated against my leaving them; and after mature deliberation, in February, I wrote Mr. Eddy a grateful acknowledgment of his kindness, but declined his proffered assistance.

"It did not occur to me, that I could go when the revival had subsided; and I therefore subjected myself to the sorrow of which he had faithfully forewarned me, and which never ceased to exist in my bosom."—p. 47.

In his diary, Mr. Davis records the agitation of his mind at this time. He had, unhappily, very unwise counsellors around him. Under the date of Jan. 18, 1816, he says :

"With a heavy heart and sorrowful mind I left home this morning for Providence, to visit Mr. Eddy, who so generously offered me assistance in obtaining an education. The people are much opposed to my leaving them. O, may the Lord give me direction and strength to perform that which he shall make known to be his will!

"*Feb. 3d.*—Elder S. called and advised with me on the foregoing subject, and asked me with whom I should leave these few sheep and lambs.

"*4th.*—This morning much dispirited. The time has come when I must answer the earnest solicitations of the people, many of whom were present; and I addressed a deeply affected audience from Exodus 3: 14; 'Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I Am hath sent me unto you.' Had some freedom in the application. My conclusion was, to continue with them another year; and O, may God keep us in the love of the truth as it is in Jesus!"—pp. 48, 49.

The compiler adds the following impressive and excellent advice :

"If these pages should pass under the eye of any young man who has the gospel ministry in contemplation, and who has not enjoyed

the advantages of mental culture, let him not hesitate to form a purpose to enjoy them, nor be dissuaded from that purpose, when formed. Such is the advice of him, who, though dead, yet speaketh to every such young man."—p. 49.

On the 13th of June, 1816, he was ordained as pastor of the church in Preston. In January, 1817, he was married to Miss Abigail Leonard, of Preston. He was now in his twentieth year, a married man, and a pastor, with a salary of \$150 per annum!

He now began to make some vigorous and systematic efforts to improve his mind. His diary contains frequent allusions to his studies :

"I now began to think, in earnest, that some increase of education was necessary. From the time I was ten years of age until I commenced preaching, at the age of seventeen, I had received but about fourteen weeks' schooling. I had, in fact, learned nothing but to read and to write. Since the commencement of my ministry, I had studied grammar, assisted by a daughter of Capt. Daniel Meech, so far as she could assist me, and pursued it much farther by myself, and had just commenced the study of Latin with Rev. Mr. Hyde, the Congregational minister of Preston. But the people with whom I was laboring were at that time decidedly opposed to my devoting much time to scientific improvement. This fact, together with the inadequacy of my support, determined me on leaving them."—p. 58.

Mr. Davis was invited to become the pastor of the Baptist church in South Reading, Mass.; and on the 23d of April, 1818, he was recognised as the pastor of that church. Here his ministry was laborious, faithful, and prosperous. Here he continued his studies with great industry and perseverance :

"I pursued the study of Latin with Rev. Mr. Winchell, of Boston, Rev. George Phippen, of Woburn, and Dr. Samuel Hart, of South Reading. My mind was so much occupied with studies disconnected with my ministerial office, that I had but little enjoyment, and accomplished but little good. While I was reading Virgil, I studied intensely from Monday morning till Friday night, leaving but one day to prepare for the services of the Sabbath.

"The same may be said respecting the greater part of the second year. In connection with Latin, I commenced the study of Greek with Rev. Mr. Winchell, of Boston, June 2, 1819. I frequently went to Boston on foot to recite to him. The distance between South Reading and Boston is ten miles. My mind was much engrossed in my studies; and if I had not been situated among a most indulgent people, they would have been quite dissatisfied with my lean sermons, and I should have been compelled to desist from so close an application to *dead* languages. The hope of deriving future benefit, I suppose, made them quiet. I received considerable assistance in the study of Greek, after Mr. Winchell's health declined,

from Joshua Prescott, Esq., of Reading. My walk, while I recited to him, was more than three miles. I ought, in gratitude, to say, that none of my instructors made any charge for their very acceptable services."—pp. 65, 66.

During his residence at South Reading, repeated revivals of religion were enjoyed, and the church was considerably increased. He kept school a part of the time. He makes mention repeatedly of pursuing his studies with different individuals. By these efforts, he acquired some knowledge of Latin, Greek, and Hebrew, and made a respectable progress in some other studies. He could not, of course, under such circumstances, become an accurate or profound scholar; but he obtained a fund of useful knowledge, which was highly creditable to his industry and mental vigor.

His active habits and pious zeal led him to make frequent journeys, and to preach often in other places. He became, in this way, extensively known; and he was often invited to leave South Reading. But he did not yield to these solicitations, till 1829, when he accepted an invitation from the First Baptist Church in Hartford; and on the 29th of July, he was recognised as the pastor of that church. In his journal, he gives the following statements concerning the results of his ministry at South Reading:

"I have some powerful inducements to remain in my present location. I have now been preaching in South Reading about eleven years; and my labors, imperfect as they have been, have nevertheless been blessed of God. By my exertions, the meeting-house has been removed to a more eligible site, and twice enlarged; the Society has nearly doubled in number; there have been two revivals, and more than *one hundred* have been added to the church, many of whom are the evident seals of my ministry, and of course the object of my warm affections.

"I have formed an intimate and endearing acquaintance with the churches and ministers of Jesus in this vicinity, and am sufficiently respected by them. The academy, which I have been instrumental in establishing, is becoming more and more respectable, and promises to be a rich blessing to the denomination, and to this Society in particular. The exertions of the pious students render my labors lighter, and my situation, in this respect, more pleasant than it ever has been."—pp. 117, 118.

In Hartford, he spent the remainder of his life. His labors were successful. He had the pleasure of baptizing a considerable number of persons, among whom were three of his own children. A new meeting-house was built for the



First Church. A second Baptist church was formed in the city, and a handsome house was erected.

But the Saviour was pleased to call his servant from his station on earth. In August, 1836, he visited Boston, and was there seized with a fever, which terminated his life on Sabbath morning, September 11, in the fortieth year of his age. The following paragraphs are extracted from an interesting account of his last illness, written by the Rev. Mr. Jackson, who has succeeded him as pastor of the church at Hartford :

"During the first of his confinement, his religious enjoyment was, in its character, peculiarly cheerful, holy, and serene. Nor was it less so, when, on the Lord's day preceding his death, his disease, which had been a slow intermittent bilious fever, assumed the character of the typhus, and indicated, both to him, to his physicians and friends, that it would probably terminate fatally. At these symptoms, he felt no alarm, but conversed calmly and understandingly on his case and his prospects. When he had relinquished all hope of surviving, he was nevertheless composed ; nay, more, his was the serene triumph of holy faith in Christ. He was collected, and undaunted, and happy. His mind was perfectly clear to the last.

"It was on Friday last, that I visited him for the first time since my return from this city. When I entered his room, and looked upon his countenance, so altered was every feature of it, that I recognised him not. But his well-known voice brought him to my knowledge. As I drew near his bed, he said to me, with his hands raised towards heaven, 'I have no will—no will in this matter ; I am willing to live or to die, as God sees proper. The Lord is my Shepherd.' I responded, 'Therefore you will not want.' 'Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil.' 'No,' I answered ; 'his staff and his rod, they comfort you.' 'Yes,' said he ; 'I hold not them, but they hold me.'

"On the same day, he said to his companion, 'It would be pleasant to preach the gospel again, and try to do a little more good in the world ; but it seems to me, I would rather mount,' pointing his hand upwards.

"I saw him again on Saturday evening. I inquired of him the state of his religious feelings then, and the character of his prospects. He raised his hands towards heaven, and with a full smile on his countenance, said, in a low whisper, '*Bright, bright.*'

"That night he was restless, especially towards morning ; and about sunrise it was apparent, that he could not long survive. About eight o'clock, he exclaimed, 'I am going ; hand me my will, that I may sign it.' He signed it with difficulty, and then said, 'I have done every thing I wish to do below.' Turning to his companion, he bade her 'Good-by ;' then raising his voice a little, 'Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly.' The words, '*grace, grace,*' quivered upon his trembling voice ; and on saying, '*I mount,*' at half past eight o'clock, his happy spirit did mount,—it did fly.

"Thus died our beloved Davis. He had observed, a few days before his death, 'If I live till the Sabbath, it will be pleasant to me, that so much prayer is going up in the sanctuaries for me;' but when that hour came, his work was praise."—pp. 161, 162.

He left a widow and five children, all of whom are minors. His daughter Sarah, an interesting and pious girl, died in 1834.

In 1833, he received the degree of A. M. from Yale College; and in 1835, the Wesleyan University, at Middletown, Ct., conferred on him the degree of D. D.

These are the principal facts, which are detailed in the Memoir. They are sufficient to prove, that he possessed uncommon vigor of mind, much energy of character, and many valuable gifts as a minister of the gospel. His piety was unquestionable; and his private journal, now published, shows, that he employed much time in fasting and secret prayer, and in reading the Scriptures.\* His manners were affable, and his social affections strong. He had great self-possession, an aptitude for business, a strong voice, and a large person. These qualities well fitted him to take an active part in public bodies; and he was often selected to fill various offices. His natural temperament was ardent, bold and ambitious. He himself pleasantly acknowledged to the writer, on one occasion, that he had a large development of the organ of self-esteem. But the grace of God reigned in his heart, and made the aspiring energy of his character a constant and vigorous impulse to do good. Few ministers have been more useful, and very few have been more generally and deservedly beloved.

The sermons, contained in this volume, are on the following subjects:—John's Baptism; The Subjects of Baptism; The Mode of Baptism; Restricted Communion; The Origin and History of the Baptist Denomination; Objections to the Sentiments which distinguish the Baptists as a Denomination examined. These topics are treated with much acuteness and can-

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\* His habits, in regard to reading the Scriptures, are thus stated by himself:—"For many years, I read ten chapters in the Bible every day, except the Sabbath, until I had read the Bible through in course fifteen or sixteen times; and this was a profitable employment, as it made me familiar with the lively oracles. After this, I adopted the plan of reading one chapter a day critically, and all the notes of Henry on that chapter. This enriched my mind with scripture knowledge; but when, in addition to this, I read another chapter *on my knees*, with express reference to my own religious benefit, it often imbued my soul with 'the spirit of truth,' and I experienced more fully what is denominated 'the comfort of the Scriptures.'"—p. 141.

dor. They present all the usual arguments, and a judicious statement of the critical and historical proofs. They are valuable, for those persons, especially, who have not ready access to other books. The author published, during his life, an ingenious Dialogue on Communion, which has been widely circulated. He also published a small selection of hymns; and, in conjunction with the Rev. Mr. Linsley, he published, just before his death, a larger collection. EDITOR.

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#### ARTICLE VIII.

##### THE THEATRE.

*The Theatre, in its Influence upon Literature, Morals and Religion.* By ROBERT TURNBULL, Pastor of the South Baptist Church, Hartford, Ct. Hartford. Canfield & Robins. pp. 58. 1837.

THIS treatise was first delivered by the author, as a lecture, at a time when a measure in favor of theatres was pending before the Legislature of Connecticut. This measure, we believe, was rejected, in a manner worthy of the land of steady habits. Mr. Turnbull has, by request, given to his discourse the shape of an essay, and has published it in a neat form. It will, we hope, be very useful. It presents a number of arguments against theatres, which are illustrated and urged with much force. The style has some of the ordinary faults of a young and ardent writer,—diffuseness, and occasional negligence; but it is vigorous, animated and impressive.

The subject discussed in this essay is a very important one, and it ought to be frequently urged on the public attention. We propose to offer a few thoughts.

There is a gratifying unanimity of opinion among pious men, respecting the tendency of theatrical amusements. They are so uncongenial with the feelings of a pure heart, and so hostile to the cultivation of true piety, that no man could, in this country, maintain the character of a serious Christian, who was in the habit of visiting the theatre.

But this decided opposition is not confined to professors of religion. Many others are convinced, that theatres tend to corrupt the morals and undermine the prosperity of the community. Parents have seen their children seduced and ruined by the corruptions of the theatre. Employers have beheld its pernicious effects on their clerks and apprentices. Thoughtful patriots have observed its ruinous bearing on the public interests. There is, in short, a widely spread conviction, even among persons who are not governed by religious motives, that the theatre is a fountain of evil, and that humanity and patriotism ought to impel every philanthropist to do what he can to check the flow of its bitter waters.

The enlightened opposers of theatres do not, however, object to innocent amusements. They know, that the mind requires relaxation; and they praise the benevolent Creator, that he has opened, on every side, inexhaustible sources of pure enjoyment. They are not insensible to the genius which has been displayed by many dramatic writers; nor do they deny, that painting, music and eloquence have often united to adorn the stage with many fascinations. They are friends to the fine arts, and wish to foster them, as not only innocent in themselves, but as capable of adding to the happiness of men, and of contributing to advance the glory of God. They are forced, nevertheless, to oppose the theatre, because they are painfully convinced, that its influence is pernicious, and that its acknowledged attractions make it the more fearfully dangerous. Several arguments may be offered in favor of this opinion.

The character of plays must be considered. If these were uniformly of a pure moral tendency; if they always taught lessons of virtue; if they could allure the young into the paths of wisdom, and could foster in every bosom, love to God and to mankind, the case would be widely different. But such is not the general character of plays. Much has, indeed, been said, concerning the moral tendency of the drama. The theatre has been proclaimed to be a school of virtue, intended

“To wake the soul by tender strokes of art,  
To raise the genius and to mend the heart;  
To make mankind, in conscious virtue bold,  
Live o’er each scene, and be what they behold.”\*

We need not discuss the question, whether the theatre might

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\* Pope’s Prologue to Addison’s *Cato*.



be made a place of pure and impressive moral instruction. We may say, with Pollok,

"The theatre was, from the very first,  
The favorite haunt of sin; though honest men,  
Some very honest, wise and worthy men,  
Maintained, it might be turned to good account;  
And so, perhaps, it might, but never was:  
From first to last, it was an evil place."\*

A brief glance at the history of the stage may help us to form a correct opinion. Plays originated in Greece, at the festivals held in honor of the heathen deity, Bacchus, several hundred years before the Saviour's birth. At these festivals, drunkenness and debauchery prevailed; lewd songs were sung; actors and a dialogue were afterwards added; and gradually the drama assumed its present form. Though the "lofty, grave tragedians," Æschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides, may deserve the praise of Milton,† as

"High actions and high passions best describing,"

yet the theatre, in Greece, and afterwards in Rome, became an intolerable nuisance. An able writer says:

"Solon,—the Athenian people,—the Spartans under Lycurgus,—Plato, Socrates and Plutarch,—have all borne decided testimony to the immoral tendencies of the theatre. From Greece, it passed over to Rome; and here it was held in no higher estimation than in the father land. It was regarded by her citizens as injurious, and put under a vigilant censorship, and obtained only an occasional toleration, until the time of Pompey the Great, who, by his immense power, succeeded in establishing a permanent theatre. The wiser Romans always resisted and opposed it. Seneca, Quinctilian, Cicero, Ovid, Tacitus, Livy, and Tertullian, speak of its immoral tendencies with equal boldness and decision. The theatre continued to prevail, however, both in Rome and Greece, until the time of Constantine, when it was exiled from Christendom.

"When, however, Christianity, by losing her simplicity and moral strength, lost also her influence, the theatre reappeared in the very heart of Christendom. But, notwithstanding that was an age of darkness, there was a sufficiency of the glimmerings of light to show the world, that the resurrection from the dead was for the public weal, and not for the public weal. Dark as the times were, and small as was the moral strength of the age, the theatre was promptly and distinctly condemned. Severe laws were enacted against it, which, besides other mulcts, denied the actors all the public honors of state. The papal church, with one united voice, declared against it, and

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\* Course of Time, b. vi.

† Paradise Regained, b. iv.

has left on her records, for the perusal of all men, the evidences of her decided disapprobation.

"From Rome, the drama passed to England, where, at first, so strong was the public conviction of its immoral tendencies, it could only find footing in private families. From this beginning, it gradually extended its influence, until it obtained a permanent footing. Yet it has ever met with the decided disapprobation of the prominent friends of morality and virtue.

"From England, the theatre emigrated to the new world; not, however, with the pilgrim fathers. It was in the dew of its youth, when it was pointed out by the fathers of our country for the avoidance of their contemporaries and successors. Not long after the declaration of independence, the American Congress passed, unanimously, the following noble vote:

"Whereas true religion and good morals are the only solid foundation of public liberty and happiness, *Resolved*, That it be, and hereby is, earnestly recommended to the several States, to take the most effectual measures for the encouragement thereof (i. e. of religion and morality), and for the suppression of *theatrical entertainments, horse-racing, gaming*, and such other diversions as are productive of idleness, and dissipation, and general depravity of principles and manners."

An examination of the most popular plays would show, that their tendency must be evil. Most of them exhibit, with applause, characters and actions, which are condemned by the word of God. Principles are taught, which the Bible forbids. Unnatural and romantic views of life are displayed. Honor is often represented as a higher principle of action than religion. Love is made the chief business of life. Vice is rendered attractive, by uniting it with beauty, wit, rank and wealth. Almost every objection which can be made to the worst novels applies, with increased force, to the greater part of plays. Hannah More, who, in the early part of her life, wrote several plays, but who afterwards became a decided opposer of the theatre, says:

"What I insist on is, that there almost inevitably runs through the whole web of the tragic drama (for to this least blamable half of stage composition I confine my remarks, as against comedy still stronger objections may be made) a prominent thread of false principle. It is generally the leading object of the poet, to erect a standard of honor, in direct opposition to the standard of Christianity; and this is not done subordinately, incidentally, occasionally; but worldly honor is the very soul, and spirit, and life-giving principle of the drama. Honor is the religion of tragedy. It is her moral and political law. Her dictates form its institutes. Fear and shame are the capital crimes in her code. Against these, all the eloquence of her most powerful pleaders,—against these, her penal statutes, pistol,

sword and poison, are in full force. Injured honor can only be vindicated at the point of the sword; the stains of injured reputation can only be washed out in blood. Love, jealousy, hatred, ambition, pride, revenge, are too often elevated into the rank of splendid virtues, and form a dazzling system of worldly morality, in direct contradiction to the spirit of that religion, whose characteristics are charity, meekness, peaceableness, long-suffering, gentleness, forgiveness. 'The fruits of the Spirit,' and the fruits of the stage, if the parallel were followed up, as it might easily be, would, perhaps, exhibit as pointed a contrast as human imagination could conceive."\*

Such is the opinion of a very competent judge, respecting tragedy. Of comedies, Dr. Campbell says:

"Not to mention the gross indecencies with which many of them abound (and to the reproach of our national taste as well as morals, English comedy, perhaps, more than any other), what is generally the hero of the piece, but a professed rake or libertine, who is a man of more spirit, forsooth, than to be checked in his pursuits by the restraints of religion, the dictates of conscience, the laws of society, or (which were accounted sacred, even among pagans or barbarians) by the rights of hospitality or of private friendship? Such a one, the poet, in order to recommend him to the special favor of the audience, adorns with all the wit, and humor, and other talents, of which he himself is master, and always crowns with success in the end. Hence it is, that the stage with us may, without any hyperbole, be defined the school of gallantry and intrigue; in other words, the school of dissoluteness. Here the youth of both sexes may learn to get rid of that troublesome companion, modesty, intended by Providence as a guard to virtue, and a check against licentiousness. Here vice may soon provide herself in a proper stock of effrontery for effectuating her designs, and triumphing over innocence."†

But, besides the general effect of plays to produce false views of life, to generate romantic expectations, and to teach licentious principles, there is a large infusion of profaneness, obscenity, and scoffs at religion. The most popular plays are disfigured by oaths, indecent allusions, and indelicate actions. The best tragedies of Shakspeare contain many offensive passages, which no virtuous person can even read without aversion. Comedy and farce are generally full of indelicate speeches and scenes. Lord Kames well describes the character of the greater part of these entertainments:

"The licentious court of Charles II., among its many disorders, engendered a pest, the virulence of which subsists to this day. The English comedy, copying the manners of the court, became abominably licentious, and continues so, with very little softening. It is

\* Hannah More's Works, vol. v., pp. 9, 10, N. Y. ed.

† Campbell's Lectures on Pulpit Eloquence, Lec. v.

there an established rule, to deck out the chief characters with every vice, however gross. But as such characters, viewed in a true light, would be disgusting, care is taken to disguise their deformity under the embellishments of wit, sprightliness and good humor. It requires not much thought, to discover the poisonous influence of such plays. How odious ought writers to be, who thus employ the talents they have from their Maker, most traitorously against himself, by endeavoring to corrupt and disfigure his creatures! If the comedies of Congreve did not rack him with remorse, in his last moments, he must have been lost to all sense of virtue.\*

When the author has not introduced immodest speeches and actions, the actors often seize the opportunity to make indelicate jests, to utter oaths, and to assume indecent attitudes. Rarely is a play performed, without the exhibition of scenes, which no one can witness without a blush, unless habit has overcome the force of modesty. This pernicious effect of the play is increased by the scenery, the dresses, the music, and all the other attractions of a theatre. Vicious principles are, in these circumstances, instilled into the mind with fatal celerity, the passions are easily kindled, the imagination is inflamed, and the spectator is prepared "to be what he beholds,"—to practise himself the actions which he sees exhibited on the stage.

How dangerous, then, must be a place, where the plays themselves tend to corrupt the mind, and to inspire licentious passions! All plays, it is true, are not of this character; but few plays become popular, which have not more or less of unsound sentiments and of immodest passages. No thoughtful parent would put into the hands of his child a volume of the plays of Shakspeare or Dryden, unless certain parts were omitted. But if it would be injurious to *read* them, how much more dangerous must it be, to see them performed, amid blazing lights, and gay scenery, and seductive music; by actors, too, who love to dwell on every indecent passage, and who often supply, from their own impure imaginations, what the author may have omitted!

It deserves notice, here, that among the most popular exhibitions at the theatre, at the present time, is the indelicate dancing of French and Italian women. A late writer says of the dancing at the King's Theatre, in London, that "it is now looked on as the great attraction. It certainly displays a science and a facility of evolution, of which no one who has not seen it can form any conception; but when the dancers are

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\* Kames' Elements of Criticism, part 1, sec. 2.



females, it is not the best means which could be employed to inspire notions of delicacy in the minds of those ladies who are among the spectators. How they can not only witness it without a blush mantling their cheeks, but talk of it in terms of unqualified admiration to their acquaintances of the other sex, must appear passing strange to those who have not mixed in the society of the metropolis. In the provincial towns, the favorite style of female dancing at the Italian opera would not be tolerated for a moment. Every lady would regard it as a personal insult, to be asked to witness such an exhibition." The writer then pays a compliment to the Americans, and says, that a female dancer, who should practise in America the attitudes which are so much applauded in London, "would have ample cause of gratitude, if she escaped being torn in pieces."\* This compliment, we fear, is not deserved. This abominable dancing, a little modified, perhaps, has been introduced into this country, and has been received with liberal patronage and applause. The tendency will be, to spread among American ladies the profligacy which is so common among the higher classes in Europe.

Another objection to theatres is found in the general character of actors. It is not denied, that some performers have been respectable; but it is notorious, that, as a class, they are every where considered as unfit companions for virtuous people. Their amusing talents may sometimes gain for them an admission into good society; but they are rarely treated as intimate friends. The wit, and still more, perhaps, the wealth, of Garrick, raised him to the society of such men as Johnson, Burke, Goldsmith, and Reynolds; but it is plain, that they felt very little respect for him. Johnson alternately praised and censured him, according to the prevailing mood of the sage; and Goldsmith, in his pungent satire, "*Retaliation*," pierces the great actor with his keenest shafts. No considerate man would be willing to admit a playactor to his house as a familiar friend, and much less to bestow on him his daughter. No man, who respected himself and wished for a virtuous wife, would marry an actress. If, then, such is the general character of performers, how is it possible, that even moral plays can fail to receive a tinge of pollution, when represented by men and women, whose morals are impure? How can a youth escape contami-

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\* *The Great Metropolis*, pp. 37, 38.

nation, while hearing and seeing such persons? How can virtuous ladies honor them with their presence? Dr. Wayland well remarks :

"It would be interesting, to learn on what principle of morals a virtuous woman would justify her attendance upon an amusement, in which she beholds before her a once lovely female, uttering covert obscenity in the presence of thousands; and where she is surrounded by hundreds of women, also once lovely, but now abandoned, whose ruin has been consummated by this very means, and who assemble in this place, with the more certain assurance of thus being able, more successfully, to effect the ruin of others."\*

Dr. Witherspoon, in his "Inquiry into the Nature and Effects of the Stage," says :

"It is amazing to think, that women, who pretend to decency and reputation, whose brightest ornament ought to be modesty, should continue to abet, by their presence, so much unchastity as is to be found in a theatre. How few plays are acted, which a modest woman can see, consistently with decency, in every part! There are ladies, who frequently attend the stage, who, if they were but once entertained with the same images in a private family, with which they are often presented there, would rise with indignation, and reckon their reputation ruined, if they ever should return. I may safely affirm, that no woman of reputation, much less of piety, who has been ten times in a playhouse, durst repeat in company all that she has heard there. With what consistency they gravely return to the same school of lewdness, they themselves best know."

The company usually assembled at a theatre is dangerous to morals. While some respectable persons are found there, it is a common resort for the vulgar and the vicious, of every description. Robberies are often committed there; quarrels take place; and sometimes murders are perpetrated. But lewd women are always found there, in large numbers. They usually occupy a particular part of the house, and thus are known to the audience. They use their arts of enticement in the house itself; and after the play, are found in the neighborhood, watching for opportunities to allure men to ruin. The attendance of prostitutes is encouraged by the managers of theatres, for the purpose of attracting men. In London, and we presume in this country, they are admitted at a lower price than others. It is said, that in a certain theatre in this country, the manager was induced to exclude these women from the house; but such a diminution in the male part of the

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\* Elements of Moral Science, p. 305, 3d edition.

audience ensued, that he was obliged to open the doors again to the prostitutes. Sir Walter Scott, in his Essay on the Drama, speaks in strong terms of the audacious effrontery of these women at the theatres in London. He says, "No man of delicacy would wish the female part of his family to be exposed to such scenes; no man of sense would wish to put youth of the male sex in the way of such temptation." He states, that, "unless in the case of strong attraction upon the stage, prostitutes and their admirers usually form the principal part of the audience."\* This is, doubtless, true in general of American theatres.

How dreadful a place, then, is a theatre! How many a youth has here begun a course of vice, which has led him to ruin! How many fathers have bewailed the hour, when they sent their innocent sons to the city, there to be enticed to the playhouse, and ensnared by wicked women! How many mothers have gone down to the grave with a broken heart, in consequence of the ruin of a child at the theatre! "Some time ago," says a British clergyman, "I called to see a mother. She was in distress. She not merely wept, but wept aloud. 'What is the matter?' 'O, my child!' and she wept again. 'O, my child is just committed to prison!' and she wept again. 'O, my child is just committed to prison, and I fear he will never return to his father's house!' and she wept again; and, with all my firmness, I could not forbear weeping, too. I was afraid to ask the cause. I did not need; for she said, 'O, that THEATRE! He was a virtuous, kind youth, *till that theatre proved his ruin!*'"

Multitudes of young men have been led to rob their parents or employers, for the purpose of procuring the means of buying tickets, and paying for other criminal indulgences at the theatre. This is a well-known fact, in all large cities, and it is a cause of lamentation and alarm. "I believe," says a writer before quoted, "that more of the youths among the lower orders in London begin their career as thieves, in order that they may have the means of gratifying their *penchant* for theatricals, than from any other cause that could be named."† At a place of confinement for juvenile offenders, in one of our American cities, it was found, on examination, that a large proportion

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\* Prose Works, vol. vi., p. 291.

† Great Metropolis, p. 25.

of the boys began their course of crime by stealing money, that they might buy tickets for the theatre. How dreadful a nuisance is a place, which is a constant temptation to dishonesty ! How strange, that society will tolerate establishments, which are annually ruining multitudes, for time and for eternity !

Those who frequent the theatre are in danger of contracting habits of intemperate drinking. A bar-room, furnished with every kind of tempting liquors, is almost invariably an appendage of a theatre. The excitement, the late hours, the fatigue, the example of others, the direct enticements, perhaps, of persons who wish to ruin him, tempt the inexperienced youth to drink ; and thus, in many cases, have fatal habits of intemperance been formed.\*

The waste of time is great ; for those who attend must spend time in preparation, and they are unfitted for early rising and for labor the next day. In London, it is said, "when any of the great houses are expected to be unusually full, the lower classes will besiege the doors, in great numbers, two or three hours before the time of opening them, in their anxiety to get a good seat." Thus are habits of idleness and dissipation formed. The waste of money is great, to those who attend ; and the public are losers, by the vast sums which are paid to actors.† Fifty or a hundred thousand dollars, and even more, are said to have been paid to some performers in this country ; and as these persons are generally foreigners, they carry their money away. Some persons pretend to be alarmed, because considerable sums are spent in supporting foreign missions ; but they manifest no objection to paying more money to a French female dancer, than would support fifty missionaries. The effect on the health is injurious. The late hours to which theatrical entertainments are usually continued are prejudicial, especially to the young, by abridging the time of needful rest. An exposure to the night air, at late hours, after having been confined in a hot, crowded house, has often laid the foundation of fatal diseases.

Other objections to the stage might be mentioned ; but these are sufficient to show, that the strong disapprobation which

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\* Might not Mr. Sargent do a good service, by making the seductions of the theatre the topic of a Temperance Tale ?

† The manager of the Bowery Theatre, in New-York, has stated in the papers, that he received nearly \$800,000 in seven years !



many persons feel towards theatres does not spring from prejudice or bigotry, but from a well-founded conviction, that they are injurious to the best interests of society. For all these effects, there is no compensation. No benefit results from theatrical entertainments, which might not be obtained without exposure to the dangers which beset them. Any good sentiments which plays contain might be acquired by reading them. But it is not the sentiments which those who frequent theatres wish to learn. This is proved by the fact, that the best plays are not so attractive as the singing, and dancing, and feats of horsemanship, and various melodramatic exhibitions. If painting, music, and eloquent oratory were the attractions, there are other and safer opportunities of gratifying a taste for these arts. In fact, mere amusement is the object which draws the best part of an audience to the theatre; the other part are allured by its facilities for vicious indulgence. But how much nobler, cheaper and safer a source of recreation,—we speak not now of the elevated pleasures of religion,—is found in virtuous social intercourse; in the multitude of interesting books and periodical publications with which our country abounds; in scientific pursuits and experiments, for which cheap apparatus may be easily obtained; and in the lyceums and lectures which are found in almost every village? These have already diminished the attendance on the theatre. It is exceedingly desirable, that a taste for these innocent and useful pleasures may be still more widely spread, and that the means of satisfying it may be multiplied.

How can parents, who reflect at all on the dangers which surround the theatre, expose their children to its contaminations? How can they be willing, that their sons should frequent a place, where they are beset by temptations to drunkenness, where they behold scenes adapted to corrupt their minds, and where the vilest women are found in crowds? How can a parent sleep in peace, while his child is in such a place, at midnight, surrounded by such temptations, and exposed to such terrific dangers? How, still more, can a parent encourage his child, by going himself to the theatre, and sanctioning, by his presence, the outrages on decency which are there witnessed? How, above all, can a religious man, who loves the soul of his child, consent to his visiting the theatre, where Satan holds his court,—where, in the strong language of Pollok, such things are often done, as make

"The devils blush, and from the neighborhood,  
Angels and holy men, trembling, retire?"

Surely, every pious man must shrink with horror from the thought. As he regards the temporal welfare of his child,—as he loves his immortal soul,—he ought to exert all his influence to keep him from this temple of Moloch, where both soul and body are often sacrificed. A pious parent ought not, on any consideration, to consent that his child should visit the theatre. He should make home as attractive as possible; he should provide books and other sources of innocent amusement; he should employ argument and affectionate persuasion; but he must, if necessary, interpose the authority which God has given him, to keep back his child from the gulf of ruin.

We may now ask, in view of these considerations, should not every parent use his influence against theatres? Ought not every patriot to oppose them? Why should society uphold a school of vice? Why refuse licenses to retail spirituous liquors, and yet allow theatres, where habits of intemperance are contracted? Why build houses of reformation, and yet encourage theatres, which tempt the young to become thieves? Why denounce brothels, and still countenance the theatre, which is often itself a brothel, and from which there is a broad, and beaten, and crowded road to the house of infamy and death?

To those who love the theatre,—if any such persons read our pages,—we would address a few words of affectionate persuasion. Your own consciences must acknowledge the truth of the preceding remarks. You know, that you expose your health at the theatre; that your virtuous principles are weakened; that your minds are filled with lascivious thoughts; that your bad passions are stimulated; and that you are often exposed to perilous temptations. You know, that after you have been at the theatre, the thought of God and of eternity is unwelcome, and that you feel unprepared to die. Yet death must come; and when your souls shall be on the brink of eternity, with what feelings will you look back on the hours spent at the theatre? The celebrated Mr. Hervey once heard a lady describing the pleasures of the theatre, and dwelling on the happiness enjoyed in anticipating the performance, the happiness of witnessing the play, and the happiness of reflecting on it afterwards. "You have forgotten, madam," said he, "one other source of gratification." She earnestly inquired his

meaning. "*The pleasure*," he replied, "*of remembering on the deathbed the scenes of the theatre.*" This timely rebuke sunk into her mind, and she became a pious Christian. Happy would it be, if all the votaries of sinful pleasure would follow her example,—if they would think of their souls, of the displeasure of God against all who disobey his commands, of the approaching judgment, and of that awful eternity, when all who loved not God on earth will be banished from his presence for ever!

EDITOR.

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ARTICLE IX.

## RELIGIOUS REVIVAL.

It is our design, in the following paper, to discuss the nature, the conditions, and the means of religious revival,—a subject of deep interest and vast importance.

The expression, *revival of religion*, has been in common use in this country for a number of years, as designating a season of special interest and prosperity in the church, or in particular churches. When a religious body is not enjoying any special and unusual prosperity, and receiving accessions of converted persons from the world, it is said to be *not a time of revival*. Occasionally, you will hear such bodies describing their condition, as one in which, though no revival is enjoyed, the institutions and ordinances of God are attended to, and peace and harmony exist amongst the members. It consequently happens, that revivals are regarded only as occasional events, which happen at irregular and distant intervals, and which, in their very nature, are intended to be transitory. They are considered as exceedingly desirable, are anticipated with intense interest by the churches, and when they come, are hailed with demonstrations of peculiar joy. But, somehow, they do not last long, and, after visiting the churches for a few weeks or months, take their departure, to the deep and unfeigned regret of all interested. Hence, also, the intermediate seasons,—the seasons, we mean, which intervene between revivals,—have come to be regarded as necessarily seasons of

depression and declension, with which no one ought to be satisfied, and in which it is not commonly expected, that Christians should possess much faith or fervor. Many have taken this for granted, and poured bitter lamentations over those churches which are enjoying no revivals of religion, although those very churches may be walking in the faith and order of the gospel, growing in grace, and not only waiting, but praying and laboring for "the salvation of the Lord," in reference to their fellow-men. Moreover, it has come to be a question for discussion, whether the churches may not enjoy a perpetual and uninterrupted revival. Now, we regard this as a misapplication and abuse of language; for a thing which, in its very nature, cannot take place, except in peculiar circumstances, and at irregular intervals, can never be permanent and uninterrupted. If the inquiry were made, whether a church could enjoy permanent prosperity,—that is, grow in knowledge, faith and purity, and have such accessions made to it, either from week to week, month to month, or year to year, as shall, upon the whole, increase its numbers and strength,—the thing could be fully understood, and easily determined from the word of God, as both possible and desirable. Faith and prayer, active exertion, and the blessing of Heaven, will certainly secure this to every Christian church. But when such vague and, as we consider them, unscriptural views are taken of the meaning of the expression, it becomes a matter of doubt and difficulty, altogether insuperable, to answer this and similar questions.

It is our humble though decided opinion, that those persons misunderstand the nature of religious revival, who apply the phrase to every season of interest and prosperity in the church; because the preceding condition of that church, though neither so exciting or even so delightful as this, may not have been one of deadness and declension. We think, too, that an improper use is made of the expression, when it is used to describe a season in which considerable accessions of young converts are made to the church; because this may be the result of previous and long-protracted effort and prayer. God has promised to hear our prayers and bless our efforts; but, so far as we understand the Scriptures upon this subject, he has made no promise to do so *immediately* and *directly*. The sentiment expressed in the well-known lines,

"Though seed lie buried long in dust,  
It sha n't deceive our hope,"



has the sanction of the whole church, and, above all, of the Bible. "Cast thy bread upon the waters; for thou shalt find it after many days." This is language which has afforded consolation and encouragement to ministers and others in all ages of the world, and has formed the theme of many an interesting discourse with regard to the eventual success of fervent prayer, and well-directed, persevering effort. There may be a long course of preparation, on the part of a church, or on the part of individuals belonging to the church, for that season of special prosperity and increase, which by many is called a revival, and which is not usually connected, in their minds, with any such effort. No body of Christians ought to be satisfied without being useful; and if any church is declining, upon the whole,—if it is not gathering strength, from time to time, and receiving accessions of converts, we do not say regularly, but occasionally, so that its numbers and energies are increasing, *upon the whole*,—then does it need a revival, most assuredly. In this case, there is every reason to believe, that it is either built upon a false foundation, or that it consists of bad materials, or that it is in a state of fearful backsliding. Such a church, instead of being urged to go forward, ought to be *revolutionized*; new views must be taken, new feelings cherished, and new modes of action adopted. But we are not by any means prepared to adopt the sentiment, that a church, which is not receiving additions to its numbers at any given time, is in a state of declension; although this is not by any means a condition to be desired, or with which to be satisfied. But faith, love and obedience may be there; the institutions of Christ may be maintained, and his ordinances administered, and much preparation may be made for a more prosperous state of things. If, indeed, the members of such a church were fully satisfied with all this, and never prayed and labored for any thing better,—if they did not feel for the melancholy and dangerous condition of their unconverted fellow-men around them, nor make any direct efforts to bring them to Christ, we might certainly conclude, that they had departed from God, "forgotten their first love," and "gone after the ways of the world." But, after all, it is evident, from the very nature of the case, that no Christian church, which is acting in obedience to God, can possibly be uninterested in the conversion of sinners, or fail to cherish earnest desires for the "enlargement of Zion;" although we can easily conceive a church to be in this very condition,

and receive no accessions of converts, at least for a time. It will be increased *eventually*, unless there be some special reason to the contrary ; but the mere fact, that it is not receiving additions at any specific time, is not by any means proof positive, that it is in a condition of barrenness and declension.

We fear, that, upon the subject of religious revival, there has been much practical error in the churches. It has been greatly misunderstood and most grievously abused. Churches, and individual Christians also, have acted from impulse, and gone by fits and starts ; occasionally much excited, and in the enjoyment of great apparent prosperity, and in a short time as much or even more depressed, and cursed with worldliness and declension. Some good men have actually thought, that it must be so ; that prosperity, or, as they have termed it, *revival*, was an occasional and transitory thing, delightful when it came, but, like an angel from the skies, speedily taking its departure ; and the intervening periods have been seasons of discouragement, despondency and gloom. Christians and Christian churches have, by a peculiar process, wound themselves up to a high state of excitement, and then come down again to the low level of worldliness and unbelief, only to make new efforts at some future period, and repeat the same process of relapse, till their spiritual strength was actually exhausted, the church weakened, and the world hardened in unbelief. Religion has thus been made a matter of mere feeling,—feeling changeable as the wind ; while principle, and the practical every-day obedience dependent upon principle, have been discarded and neglected. The church has become nervous, hysterical and diseased, and much of the health and vigor of earlier and better days has been lost.

And it must be so, as long the faith and enjoyment of individual Christians is made to depend upon the outward prosperity of the church, and especially upon the conversion of sinners, instead of being made to depend upon the veracity and goodness of “a covenant-keeping God.” It has been too hastily concluded, that the want of special success in the conversion of sinners is an indication of individual and general declension ; hence, individuals and churches have become dissatisfied with themselves, and discouraged about their prospects. The result has been, the prostration of faith and joy, without which it is difficult, or even impossible, to make much progress in the divine life. In this way, Christians have never been happy,

except when the church to which they belonged have been enjoying a *revival*. Then all was life, energy and joy; faith grew strong, and love "began to sing;" but the revival has declined, and all that is holy and delightful declined along with it. We do not mean to say, that this has been universally the case among the churches; but it has prevailed to a very great extent.

In the Scriptures, the words *revival* and *revive* are used with a considerable variety of applications. They are used, in one case, to describe the resurrection of Christ from the dead; in another, the return of hope and joy to the wounded heart; in a third, the deliverance of Israel, as a nation, from depression and calamity; and in a fourth, the diffusion of vigor and elasticity through the wearied spirit and exhausted body. When applied to the church, they describe her resuscitation from comparative death, and her consequent restoration to prosperity and power. They may also be used, in this connection, to describe a remarkable elevation of character, and increase of energy and hope, with a corresponding extension of influence on the part of the church, after a season of languor and inactivity. This is probably the meaning of the word *revive*, in the prayer of the prophet: "O Lord, I have heard thy speech, and was afraid; O Lord, revive thy work in the midst of the years; in the midst of the years make known, in wrath remember mercy." In such a use of the term, it is equivalent to the words *awake* and *resurrection*, which, in their etymological structure and general import, may be regarded as nearly synonymous with *revive* and *revival*. Indeed, this term, properly speaking, means, *living again*, or a *resuscitation*. Revival is truly "life from the dead;" a state of such energy, hope and enjoyment, that even in those cases where there has not been a total extinction of every thing good, the preceding state of things has appeared, by contrast, one of darkness and death.

If this, however, is a correct interpretation of the term,—and we think it is, though, for the sake of brevity, we have not quoted the passages of Scripture in which it occurs, with one exception,—what shall we think of those churches or those Christians who are *living* and *dying* alternately during the whole of their existence; and especially of those who *expect* thus to *live* and to *die*, and make no attempt to produce a more uniform and consistent state of things? Is this Christianity, which, in individuals, at least, is intended to be progressive?

Is it that divine system, which, by the Spirit of God, is fitted to produce in us "*all* the peaceable fruits of righteousness, and the work of faith with *power*;" and under the holy influence of which Christians and Christian churches are to arrive at the stature of perfect men and perfect societies "in Christ Jesus?" It may be Christianity; but it is Christianity shorn of its strength, and exerting but a feeble and imperfect influence over individuals and churches.

In the scriptural sense of the word, the most distinguished and glorious revival of religion was that which took place at the resurrection of Christ, the consequent descent of the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost, and the conversion of so many thousand souls. In this case, the spiritual Zion, which had existed from the earliest times, was, as it were, resuscitated, and clothed afresh with beauty and power. Hence the prophecy of Isaiah, addressed to the church, with reference to this season,—"*Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee,*"—and the corresponding prophecy,—"*Awake, awake, put on thy strength, O Zion; put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem,*"—are thus expressed by the apostle Paul, in language more pointed and condensed: "*Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light.*" No language could more beautifully or strikingly express the true nature of a religious revival.

The reformation from popery, during the sixteenth century, was another distinguished revival; for then the church, awaking from the slumber of ages, started into a new and more glorious life, and went forth, "*conquering and to conquer,*" over the whole continent of Europe.

Religion was also greatly revived by the preaching of Whitefield, Wesley and Edwards, in England and in this country, at a subsequent period. Then a season of comparative deadness and inactivity was by their means turned into one of life and energy. Hundreds and thousands were converted to God, and Zion was not only greatly enlarged, but greatly purified and blest.

There was probably an extensive revival of religion in this country ten years ago; but the results have not equalled expectation, and many judicious men have intimated, with great probability of its truth, that the church is now suffering a decline. A little work has been just published by Dr. Chaplin,



assigning the causes which have produced this condition of things; and amongst others, he notices the following: "The prevalence of the opinion, that religious principles cannot be expected, in most cases, to be steady and constant." We have no doubt, that genuine revivals have taken place in some particular churches, during the last ten years, some of which have been of a very peculiar and glorious kind; for small and feeble churches,—churches, too, that were, in a great measure, dead and inactive,—have, by what we cannot more appropriately designate than as a special interposition of divine influence, been rendered large, active, and prosperous bodies. But the doctrine of religious revival has been misunderstood and misapplied. Attempts have been made to substitute occasional and excessive excitement for the regular and systematic operation of Christian principle. Reaction has ensued; false principles have been engendered; the sober, every-day duties of religion have been neglected; churches have been discouraged; and the *plain* preaching of the gospel has been shorn of its power. A large amount of intellectual and moral energy has been wasted, in consequence of misdirection; and hence, as we have already intimated, many churches and private Christians are suffering from exhaustion and paralysis. Many persons, also, have been introduced to the churches, under the influence of temporary excitement, who had not really passed from death to life, and are now, in consequence, diffusing their deadly leaven through the entire mass.

Besides, preachers and others have very generally adopted the sentiment, that churches and individual Christians are responsible, not for the performance of their duty to the unconverted, but for the salvation of the unconverted. It has consequently come to be an article of their creed, that whenever sinners are not converted, the church, or individuals belonging to the church, are to blame for it. They are most assuredly to blame, for not using the means requisite to secure the conversion of sinners; but we are yet to learn, that they are responsible for the results, after having thus used the means. And that this may be done, and yet no conversions ensue at specific times and in specific places, is a fact abundantly proved by experience. How can we account for the want of such success on the part of the Saviour, when, having preached the gospel to many cities and villages, it is said, "he wondered at their unbelief?" How can we account for the failure of stu-

pendous miracles and divine teaching, in the case of Chorazin and Bethsaida ; or for what the Saviour says of them,—“Wo unto thee, Chorazin ! wo unto thee, Bethsaida ! for if the mighty works had been done in Tyre and Sidon, which have been done in you, they would have repented?” We can account for these things, not by blaming the preacher or the church, but by referring it to the excessive obduracy of those hearts, which could resist such appeals. But the opposite has been very generally taught from our pulpits, and cherished by our churches ; and the consequence is, sinners have been hardened in their impenitence, while good and holy men, as well as true gospel churches, have been perplexed, discouraged and weakened.

But to return from this digression, we remark, that a single church is revived, when, after a season of deadness and declension, Jehovah is pleased to pour out his Spirit,—Christians take a higher stand, in point of faith, love and obedience,—and sinners are converted from the error of their ways, and added to the church. It is, however, not absolutely essential to a revival, that there should be accessions of converts to the church ; although this will be a very frequent result of such a revival. The main thing is, that the church itself, or the individuals composing that church, should be aroused and sanctified ; that they should become more holy, more happy, more useful. This will generally produce its appropriate effects upon the unconverted. It will naturally call their attention to the subject of religion, and may become the means of their eventual salvation.

From these remarks, it will be readily perceived, what we understand by a revival of religion. It is not an excitement upon the subject of religion, in which there may be much feeling, much bustle, much talking, much preaching, and many prayer meetings, and during which, we may add, there may be many conversions and additions to the church, but the results of which are not permanently beneficial. In such a scene, there may be much of what is good ; the truth may be preached and felt ; Christians may be happy ; and some sinners may be converted to God ; but relaxation, exhaustion and inactivity are the result ; and an observant looker-on may be led to doubt whether the church is permanently benefited.

It is not a state of outward religious prosperity, in which the preaching is good, the hearers numerous and attentive, and the people of God confident as to final success ; because success

may never come ; and amid external prosperity and high hope, piety and virtue may actually decay.

It is not a condition of progressive improvement in the church, during which Christians are growing in grace, and though liable to many fluctuations of personal feeling and experience, "to fears within and fightings without," are, upon the whole, advancing in faith and hope, in meekness and obedience, and during which there is also a gradual accession of converts from the world. This is not, properly speaking, a revival of religion, but it is a most desirable and delightful state of things. In fact, though this is not a revival, it is by far the best state in which a church can be, and infinitely to be preferred to a periodical and occasional excitement, even of the best kind.

A revival of religion must take place in a church comparatively dead, where, in consequence of a special and powerful divine influence, the dry and inanimate bones of "the valley of vision" are supplied with life and energy ; or, in other words, where professors of religion are aroused to a sense of their vast responsibilities, their glorious privileges, their immortal hopes, possess higher affections and more powerful energies in the cause of God, and, as a consequence of this, individually and unitedly "come up to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty."

Such a revival is permanent in its results, at least with reference to those who have been its subjects. They have attained a higher elevation in the divine life. They have become more holy, more like to Christ, more detached from the world, and more submissive to the will of God. They have become more humble and more happy, more devoted and more consistent, more prayerful and more watchful. They have acquired higher views of truth and duty ; and their hearts burn with a purer, more godlike affection. And the remembrance of it "will never die ;" the effect of it will be perpetuated through life, and be felt in the entire subsequent history of the church.

As a natural effect of this, the gospel, at least in its practical bearings, will be invested with greater power over the unconverted world around, and, generally speaking, sinners in large numbers will be converted to God. Still, it ought to be remarked, that the conversion of sinners is not a revival of religion ; it is merely an accompaniment or a result of a revival, not a revival itself. A revival can only take place among

Christians; although its effects will seldom be confined to them. "In unconverted men, there is nothing to revive but sin;" and to speak of a revival among them is an abuse of language. Nay, more, we can conceive of a revival, in which there are no sinners converted; and a revival, too, which will be followed by permanent results, in the improvement of individual Christians, and "the edification" of the church.

Hence, every revival must begin in the church, and with individual Christians; although it will generally result in the conviction and conversion of the ungodly, and the consequent extension of the Redeemer's kingdom.

The church is constituted with a view to the salvation of the world; and while a revival is to be desired, for its delightful effects upon individual Christian character, yet its principal design is to supply the church with increased energies and facilities for the promotion of the Saviour's cause.

Thus it is usually followed by earnest desires and fervent prayers, on the part of the church, for the conversion of souls. It is also followed by a greater willingness to support the gospel, and maintain the institutions of Christ; by increased liberality and benevolence, and a deeper interest in the salvation of the whole world. In one word, it is followed by increased practical effort and prayer for the benefit of our fellow-men.

A revival of religion, then, is a great and glorious transition from a state of religious depression and dearth to one of life, energy and hope. It consists in the permanent improvement of individuals and churches in faith, love and obedience. It is followed by increased stability and strength in the church, and an accession of converts from the world. It glorifies Christ, renders Christians happy, and confers great benefit upon the world.

We are now, in the second place, to consider the conditions upon which a revival of religion will be enjoyed, and the means by which it is to be secured and promoted. These are so intimately connected, and run so much into each other, that it will probably be best to consider them together. We shall also be under the necessity of being exceedingly brief, upon this part of our subject, having room only to indicate great general principles.

Two things are especially necessary, in order to a revival of religion in any Christian church, or in the church generally. First, that Christians be prepared for it. Second, that God in heaven exert an influence to produce it.



It depends upon God and the church, but depends upon them in different senses ; upon God as the fountain of influence, —upon the church as the recipient of that influence.

An influence may be exerted, but the church may not be in a state of suitable preparation to receive it ; nay, more, may repel the means of revival. If this is not the case, we do not understand the meaning of the following injunctions : “Grieve not the Holy Spirit ;” “Quench not the Spirit ; despise not prophesyings.”

The Spirit is beautifully and appropriately compared to a dove. And how often does that celestial dove hover above a Christian church, looking, as it were, for a spot upon which to rest ; but finding none, takes his departure for heaven !

“He flies from scenes of noise and strife.”

Preparation, then, on the part of the church, is necessary to a revival of religion. There must be a perception of her melancholy condition, induced by the preaching of the gospel, the perusal of the Scriptures, the dispensations of divine providence, or other means of grace. The church must avail herself of such means as God has put within her power, for ascertaining and feeling her state of declension and ingratitude. Her guilt must be acknowledged, penitence must be felt, and humility cherished before God. Solemn prayer must be offered, and a new dedication to God made. There must be a willingness to do the will of God ; a meeting God, so to speak, not in pride, not in self-sufficiency, not in jealousy and distrust, but in meekness, fear and faith. This must be done, just as a child, returning to the home from which he had wandered, meets his mother ; as the exile, coming back to the land of his birth, meets the friends of his early days,—of his happier years.

Above all, there must be special influence from heaven. This is required, in consequence of the deceitfulness of the human heart, and the fearful power of outward temptation. It is promised in answer to prayer ; it is given with the greatest possible freeness ; and it is given just in that precise measure and mode which our exigences require.

God and the church always go together in this interesting and delightful work. God is the giver, and the church the humble and grateful recipient. Hence, while the church is active, most active, in the promotion of revival, all the glory of it redounds to God.

As to the metaphysics of this relation, we cannot at present touch them. Perhaps the subject is somewhat beyond our grasp. It is well, at all times, to keep ourselves within the province of ascertained fact, and leave modes and relations, which in many cases are too high for us, just where we find them. It is, however, perfectly certain, that God is both able and willing to revive his work in any heart or in any church; and all that remains for us to do is, to lay open that heart and present that church to the sacred, the sanctifying influence of his Holy Spirit.

SCOTUS.

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## ARTICLE X.

### THE NESTORIANS.\*

CHRISTIANITY contemplates the universal happiness of mankind. Hence the mandate of the Redeemer to his disciples, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." This benevolent command, his legitimate followers have, in every age, attempted to carry into effect. Difficulties have presented themselves from climate, from barbarism, from habits and prejudices, from paucity of means, and from the fallen nature of the human race. But, wherever religion has revived, the spirit of beneficence has expanded its influence with renewed activity and zeal. In the fifth century, the Nestorians separated from the Greek church, on a mode of expression, supposed to involve an important point of doctrine, not strictly orthodox. The jealousies, the contests, and the violence of men of talents and dignity, in the hierarchy, hastened the decision. The Nestorians became a numerous and widely-spread sect, and for several centuries extended their exertions to countries the most remote, so as to become, for ages, the most missionary body of Christians in existence. The metaphysical subtleties of their creed we leave to those

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\* The principal sources from which the following sketch has been derived are, Assemani *Bibliotheca Orientalis*, 4 tom.; Jos. Aloys Asseman, *De Catholicis Patriarchis; Chaldaorum et Nestorianorum Commentarius*; Le Croze, *Histoire du Christianisme des Indes*; Brerewood's *Inquiries touching the Diversity of Languages and Religions*, &c.

who are fond of speculation. Their history and their missionary efforts we shall briefly sketch. Their present descendants, the Syrian Christians of Travancore, claim our attention and excite our interest; while their oblivion of past metaphysical heterodoxy justifies us in regarding their former missions as worthy of imitation.\*

*Nestorius*, from whom this sect derived their appellation, was bishop of Constantinople. From being a simple monk at Antioch, his eloquence, austerity of manners, and character for piety, occasioned him to be chosen to succeed *Sisinnius*, in the metropolitan see. On his accession to the episcopal dignity, he violently opposed the Arian and Apollinarian parties, the former of whom denied the divinity of Jesus Christ, whilst the latter, adopting an opposite extreme, confounded the two natures of Christ. Haughty in his temper, and violent in his measures, he endeavored, according to the practice of the age, to call forth the secular power against them; and in order to effect his purpose, pledged himself to aid the emperor in his warlike expeditions, if he would crush the enemies of the orthodox churches. On one occasion, his officiating chaplain having strongly inveighed against the term, "mother of God," being applied to the virgin Mary, and thereby subjected himself to contumely and violent opposition from the partisans of the phrase, *Nestorius* strenuously supported him, both by preaching and writing in favor of the views he had maintained. The violence of party disputes soon produced the most unhappy consequences. *Cyril*, the patriarch of Alexandria, irritated by the preference which had been shown to this *Nestorius*, on his election to the patriarchate of Constantinople, and jealous of any innovation on the tenets of the church, obtained a decree of excommunication and deposition against him, from *Celestine*, the bishop of Rome.

This decree was received by *Nestorius* with indignation and contempt, as an effort of the Roman pontiff to usurp an au-

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\* About the close of the sixteenth century, Don Alexis de Menezes, the Portuguese archbishop of Goa, attempted to bring the Syrian Christians into subjection to the church of Rome, and the adoption of its doctrines. They therefore called a synod at Diamper, June 20, 1599, in which the books belonging to the Syrian churches were ordered to be burned, and the adherents of the Syrian tenets to be excommunicated. By fear and persuasion, many were induced to submit to the Romish archbishop. At later periods, numbers returned to their former profession; and the distinction still exists between the native and the Romish-Syrian Christians, or the Christians of St. Thomas.

thority to which he had no claim. A council was, however, demanded by his enemies, and subsequently held at Ephesus. The machinations of Cyril prevailed; and before the patriarch of Antioch and a number of other prelates had arrived, the sentence of degradation had been pronounced, in opposition to the protest of sixty-eight bishops, several of whom bore a metropolitan rank. After violent but ineffectual efforts to resist the Ephesian mandate, Nestorius was conducted, at his own request, to his former cell, in the monastic retirement of Antioch.

But the seclusion of the monastery neither tranquillized the mind of the degraded patriarch, nor arrested the malignant violence of his enemies. He still continued to correspond with the adherents of his cause, and to receive occasional visits and presents from them; whilst his enemies were constantly traducing his character, and at length obtained a sentence of banishment against him. After four years' residence in his monastery, he was sent into exile, first into Petra, in Arabia, and then to one of the Oases of the Lybian desert, from whence he was again transferred to situations regarded as more secure from the incursions of barbarians. In the midst of the most painful circumstances, he displayed a firmness of mind and a decision of character, which, if regarded by his adversaries as obstinate and heretical, was applauded by his friends as exemplifying an unyielding attachment to truth, and the powerful influence of religious principle. His letters encouraged his followers to perseverance in the sentiments which they had received; his appeals to the governor of Thebaid awed, by the manliness of the style in which they were conveyed, and the energy of mind which they discovered; and his apologies in defence of the doctrines which he maintained, embarrassed and irritated his opponents, by their plausibility and fervor. Stung to resentment by his stern and unbending refusal to submit to the decisions of the councils which had condemned him, his enemies subjected his latter years to privations and sufferings, disgraceful to the cause which they professed to defend, and highly dishonorable to those by whom they were sanctioned or inflicted. After repeated and harassing removals from one place to another, and a temporary captivity by a wandering horde of Nubian marauders, he was so injured by a fall, near the city of Panopolis, in Upper Egypt, from which they were conveying him, that he soon afterwards expired, in the greatest agonies.



The *doctrines* of the Nestorians were, at the commencement of the disputes, such as would be very generally regarded as orthodox. Nestorius maintained, that Jesus Christ was truly God and truly man, the divine and human natures being united in him; the Word, which took upon him human nature, being equal and consubstantial with the Father; and the human nature, perfect in his kind, being composed of body and soul, and in all things like ourselves, sin excepted. But, though he believed the attributes of both natures existed in Jesus Christ, he denied, that it could be said, with propriety,—except figuratively,—that *God* was born, or suffered, or died; and in this consisted his *heresy*, according to the decisions of his enemies and opponents; since it induced him to deny, that “Mary was the mother of God.”

Long and violent controversies were the result of the unyielding tempers and surly obstinacy of the contending parties; and anathemas, excommunications and persecutions of the most violent nature were employed against each other, as the partisans of the different opinions gained political or priestly ascendancy, or direct ecclesiastical power; and every subtlety of metaphysical art was employed in defending their opinions.

After the death of their founder, the Nestorians, driven from the pale of the Greek and Latin churches, gradually assumed the character of a distinct and numerous body of Christians, governed by their own patriarchs, and extending their efforts to disseminate Christianity in many distant and idolatrous countries, especially in the East.

From the evidences which remain, there is reason to believe, that they not only did not withhold the sacred volumes from the laity, like the Greek and Latin communions, but encouraged the perusal, translation and circulation of them. At an early period, they translated them into the Syriac language, enjoined them to be read in their public schools, and ordered the priests to commit the Psalms to memory. Numerous commentaries were written, in explanation of the Scriptures; they were carried by their missionaries into the various countries which they visited, and translations of them made into the vernacular tongues of different nations. The manuscript copies of the Syriac Scriptures, obtained from their descendants in India, afford an interesting proof of the care with which they have been preserved amongst that people, and of the caution with which they have been transcribed. A manuscript copy

of the Old Testament, in Syriac, in two volumes, transcribed by a Nestorian in 1558, is deposited in the Vatican library; and a Persic version of the four gospels, from the transcript executed in 1341, in the city of Caffa, was published in England, in 1652-7, by Wheeloc and Pierson.

The missions undertaken by the Nestorians were extensive and successful. In 535, they had established themselves in Ceylon; at Nankin, in China, in 606, and at Pekin in 714; at Socotora in 535, and at Babylon before 1111. At one period, their churches were scattered over nearly the whole of Asia, stretching their line from Nankin and Pekin to Jerusalem and Egypt, and from the northern boundaries of Tartary to Ceylon. Asseman enumerates more than *two hundred and thirty* names of kingdoms, provinces or cities, in which they had established churches, some of which were metropolitan ones. In the city of Mosul alone, they had *fifteen* temples, even after it was in possession of the Mohammedans, and forty thousand who professed Nestorianism.

Their greatest prosperity appears to have been during the reign of the caliphs. At that period, their numbers, in conjunction with those of the Jacobites, were supposed to exceed those of the Greek and Latin churches united. So late as the seventeenth century, a learned Roman Catholic writer states the number of the Nestorians at *three hundred thousand*; but as he only enumerates those in communion with the church of Rome, the calculation must have been far below the actual amount; not including either the churches of the Syrian Christians in Travancore, nor many others, not subjected to the Romish yoke. At a prior period, about the year 1100, there were *two hundred thousand* adherents to the sentiments of the Nestorians, in the countries under the government of the Turks. The vicissitudes of circumstances and situations affecting the Nestorians were great and various. In several instances, the sovereigns, who governed the countries in which they resided, not only protected and encouraged them, but avowed themselves converts to their opinions. This was especially the case of Persia, and some other eastern governments. At other times, the most severe and cruel persecutions were raised against them, and immense numbers of them martyred. In Egypt and Syria, A. D. 1200, the most violent measures were pursued, to suppress and exterminate, if possible, the Nestorian Christians; the churches were despoiled and robbed;

many of the Christians were crucified ; and about *forty thousand* were put to death in various ways.

The Nestorian churches existing at present are few in number, and, generally speaking, poor. They are principally in the East, in the south of India, and in Syria and Egypt. The Syrian Christians, described by Dr. Buchanan, in his "Christian Researches," are among the most important of the descendants of the Nestorians ; but both they and the other remaining churches of this body have lost much of their original purity, zeal and discipline, and, in some instances, have nearly lost the recollection of the sentiments of their founder, and assume the belief of two distinct natures in Christ ; or, from their association with the Romish church, have become, in theory, at least, *Monophysites*, or advocates for the divinity and humanity of Christ, constituting but one nature.

J. O. C.

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## ARTICLE XI.

### CHURCH PSALMODY.

SINCE the harp of David was first struck in the praises of Israel's God, genuine poetry has not failed to leave its impress upon the character and sentiments of all classes of mankind. The strains of Homer, as they dwelt on the lips of his countrymen, through succeeding ages, not only stamped the national character of Greece to its latest day, but gave complexion to all classic antiquity. "The poet binds together, by passion and knowledge, the vast empire of human society, as it is spread over the whole earth, and over all time."\* Especially in its simpler forms, true poetry is every where felt and acknowledged as nature's own power, breathed from the soul of man, when his spirit is stirred within him. And having touched and swayed the passions of a kindred soul, it commands, at will, the obedience of the whole man.

Poetry, indeed, addresses itself directly to the passions ; but since the opinions and conduct of men are greatly dependent upon the state of their hearts, its decisive influence upon char-

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\* Wordsworth.

acter, either for good or evil, is obvious. Hence the desolating success with which its power has been marked, when subverted to the purpose of concealing the enormities and embellishing the attractions of vice. The songs and dramatic pieces of licentious writers have been lamentably successful, even among the refined, in giving to man's animal nature a fatal triumph over reason and conscience. Nor are the strains of those whose souls have felt the loveliness of truth and virtue less efficient for ennobling our intellectual nature, and asserting the supremacy of conscience. The productions of Cowper, Wordsworth and Hemans, and the less finished sketches of Pollok, will each continue to stamp their noble image upon many a soul, till the end of time. Nay more, we believe, that some of their effusions, in which there lives and breathes a holy ardor, will be the means of so affecting some minds as to enhance their joys in heaven for ever.

Of all the poetry adapted to the promotion of elevated and virtuous character, perhaps the most important is that designed expressly to be used in public and social worship. Among those who are accustomed, from childhood, to obey the weekly summons of the "church-going bell," probably no book, except the Bible, exerts so great an influence in the moulding of religious sentiments, and the formation of taste, as the adopted "Hymn Book." At all seasons of strong religious feeling, selections from its stanzas are repeatedly quoted by the pious, either as a means of promoting holy affections in their own souls, or as the most impressive vehicle by which they can transmit pious emotions from their own to other minds. Adapted, from their very form, to retain a strong hold upon the memory, they are often present, in silent admonition or entreaty, even to those who are without God in the world. They are among the earliest expressions which are committed to the memory of childhood, and the latest which linger upon the lips of departing piety.

It is sufficiently evident, from these considerations, that CHURCH PSALMODY occupies an eminent rank among the means of combined moral and intellectual culture. And the same reasons indicate, that a book, embracing a selection of lyric poetry for all the ordinary occasions, both of public and social worship, ought to be characterized throughout by correct sentiment, good taste, and a truly poetic spirit.

But we deem the qualities, essential to a good selection of



Church Psalmody, of too much consequence to be adequately described in any single sentence, however comprehensive its terms. We propose, therefore, to consider this point somewhat more in detail. The characteristics which we regard as most important can be conveniently arranged under the heads of *sentiment* and *style*, using these terms with some degree of latitude.

1. Our first remark is, that *correctness of sentiment* is essential; in other words, a piece should contain no sentiment which is not strictly true. Erroneous sentiment can be inculcated in no manner more likely to give it permanency than by inserting it in a book constantly used in the worship of God. Each one who opens it thinks of its contents as the songs of Jehovah's praise. Such an impression inspires confidence, and disposes to any thing else rather than suspicion or scrutiny; and the mind naturally receives upon trust whatever it meets, as though it were known to be established truth. If sentiments are thus received, without examination, the phraseology which they wear becomes at length habitual, the views inculcated adhere to the mind almost as if they were an integrant part of itself, and the whole impression is strengthened by association for years with the most solemn and interesting services.

Erroneous views may be taught in a hymn, either directly or by implication. In the latter case, the evil is more serious than if the sentiment were directly stated; because it is less likely to be noticed, and will more probably be left to make an unquestioned impression upon the mind.

2. Another important principle, in respect to the sentiments of Church Psalmody, is, that *they should be adapted to be sung as an act of worship*. That they are *truth*, is not of *itself alone* a sufficient reason why they should be in the hymn book. All truth is indeed important; but every truth is not important for all occasions and all purposes. It is important truth, and recorded, too, in the Scriptures, that Moses, coming from the presence of God, in Mount Sinai, when he found his brother sustaining the people in idolatry, dashed in pieces the tables of the moral law. But what purpose of worship would be answered, by attempting to sing a statement of this fact in rhyme?

It is recorded of our Saviour (Matt. 9: 15), that he once asked the disciples of John, whether it would be suitable for the attendants of a bridegroom to put on mourning at his mar-

riage. At the same time, he intimated, that fasting, though an important religious duty for seasons of affliction or humiliation, would, for those enjoying God's presence and spiritual prosperity, be as unnatural and unsuitable as to have mourners at a wedding. Now, who does not perceive, that important religious *truth* may be out of its proper time and place, as well as important religious *duty*?

Such, in our opinion, is the fact, when the anguish of lost souls, the guilty despair of hell, is made the subject of a sacred *song*, and actually chanted in the joyous strains of music. Such a treatment of the subject has a tendency (whether it be successful or not) to make us contemplate it with *exultation*, when we ought to think of it only with affecting solemnity and self-abasement. It is adapted either to destroy our impression of the awful reality of the truth, or otherwise to connect the *pleasure*, which we naturally associate with music, with the *death of a soul*; an event in which a God of justice has declared, that he has no pleasure. We do not believe it possible for any man so to reflect upon this subject, as to have just views respecting the ruin of an immortal soul, without feelings which would, for the time, render him unable to *sing any thing*, much less to make that very ruin the subject of his song. To a person having correct views, and in a right state of mind, such singing must appear a far grosser incongruity than mourning at the marriage of one's friends.

For a somewhat similar reason, we object to most of those hymns which attempt a *particular detail* of the Saviour's sufferings at his crucifixion. When the death and sufferings of Christ are referred to as a glorious display of divine love and mercy, in such manner that our attention is directed, through his sufferings, to his unbounded compassion, the piece, if suitable in other respects, is adapted to sacred music and the object of public worship. But when a hymn is so written as to fix our attention mainly upon the particulars of his pain and distress, whatever else may be said of it, it is unsuitable to be sung. On this and other accounts, the principal part of Watts's 22d Psalm, and of his first four versifications of the 69th, are decidedly objectionable.

We may also be permitted to question whether an expression of the mere *sorrows* of repentance can be appropriately connected with church music. Such emotions are more naturally expressed with weeping before God in secret. There are,

however, other subjects highly suitable for hymns to be sung in public worship (such as the goodness of God and the love of Christ), which are specially fitted to awaken feelings of penitence.

The principal religious emotions, which can be more impressively communicated by the assistance of music, are those of hope, trust, gratitude, love, and sometimes reverence. And these furnish occasion, not only for those hymns by which they are directly expressed, but also for those which express believing prayer, praise and thanksgiving; and more remotely for such as rehearse the greatness, goodness, love and mercy of God, and the acts by which he has manifested these attributes to our race.

Confession may sometimes be appropriately admitted, where it does not constitute too large a part of a hymn, and is introduced for the purpose of exalting the mercy or love of God, by showing the unworthiness of those to whom these attributes have been manifested. As a specimen of a hymn of this character, we refer to those affecting stanzas by Steele, commencing,

“How oft, alas! this wretched heart  
Has wandered from the Lord!”

[83, *W. Sup.*\*

Perhaps, also, expostulation and invitation to unrenewed men are suitable on some occasions, though, strictly speaking, they do not constitute any part of *worship*; and whenever they are introduced, we think it should always be in connection with a recital of those attributes of God which are adapted, at the same time, to lead the mind to God, and to deepen the emotions of penitence.

In a somewhat similar relation to public worship stand those specimens of lyric poetry, which are denominated *occasional hymns*; such as are adapted to the anniversaries and meetings of missionary and benevolent societies, and to some other occasions of religious interest. Though the sentiments of most of these hymns are such that the singing of them cannot be literally an act of worship, yet when they are written with good

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\* In mentioning those pieces not contained in the “Psalms and Hymns” of Dr. Watts, we have referred to their number in Winchell’s Supplement, whenever they occur in that collection; because, although not publicly used in all parts of the United States, we suppose it is more or less familiar to most of the readers of the Review.

taste, and possess a truly poetic spirit, they are adapted to church music; and the moral and religious influence of their appeals to the benevolent feelings is undoubtedly good. Utility and convenience, therefore, require that a moderate number of pieces of this character should be embraced within the limits of Church Psalmody.

II. A *suitable style* is not less essential to good lyric poetry than true and apposite sentiments. And we here use the term *style* with some degree of latitude, to include not only the character of the mere diction, but every thing which belongs to the *manner* of representing a sentiment; so that we regard a suitable style as embracing a poetical spirit, and every thing which constitutes rhetorical propriety. We shall notice particularly a few of the more important qualities.

1. Our first remark is, that every good hymn must be *poetry*. A great number of pieces have passed under the denomination of "hymns," which, without their rhymes and capitals, no mortal would ever think of taking for poetry. Nothing of this character is fit for a place in Church Psalmody. The special design of sacred music is to *awaken emotion*; to kindle into holy ardor the affections of the soul. Every line should, therefore, if possible, be fraught with impassioned feeling. A dull, frigid stanza is worse than nothing. On this account, those hymns intended to be *argumentative*, consisting of propositions and inferences, though they might do for insertion in a sermon, are wholly out of place here. Those, too, which contain a long list of historical particulars, or of divided and subdivided comparisons, have usually little poetical effect. Most of Watts's hymn (150, b. i.) on the titles of Christ, extended to twelve stanzas of six lines each, reminds us much of a table of contents. All pieces, consisting of naked statements of facts, or theological definitions of doctrines, must also, of necessity, be prosaic and unimpassioned. An expulsion from our hymn books of all pieces which are unworthy of the name of poetry, would leave very few of those usually denominated *doctrinal hymns*. Yet it would take away nothing really adapted to musical effect.

Sermons, and not hymns, are the proper productions for stating, explaining and defending important doctrines. And supposing a hymn is to be selected, to follow a doctrinal sermon, what is wanted is not a synopsis of the sermon, or of the positions it has proved, but an appeal to those *feelings of the*



*heart* which ought to be awakened by the doctrine that has been exhibited. For example, after a sermon on election, a suitable hymn would be expressive of gratitude for the mercy and wholly unmerited favor of God. Let it be understood, however, that we object to the hymns referred to, not *because* they are doctrinal, but because, from the nature of the case, they are destitute of poetic character; and however well they may speak to the head, are little better adapted to affect the heart than a chapter in astronomy.

2. As a considerable part of all good collections of hymns must consist of prayer and praise, another important quality of good style is, the use of *reverential terms and expressions in all addresses to the Deity*. Every thing like the tone of dictation or demand, which we have sometimes seen, wears the aspect of unhallowed presumption. In approaching God as the Infinite Eternal, or even as our heavenly Father, the use of any of those epithets, which we apply familiarly to our fellow-creatures, is somewhat like taking his name in a light and trifling manner. For this reason, we object to such expressions as "dear God," "dear Almighty," and "good God," the last of which, indeed, is more offensive, because it is very often used profanely. When our Saviour taught his disciples to use the precious appellation, "Our Father," that it might not lead them to forget how holy and infinitely exalted he is, he instructed them immediately to add, "hallowed be thy name." When we approach God as revealed in Christ, and uniting the character of a Mediator, some more familiarity is proper; and the expressions, "dear Saviour," and "dear Redeemer," are very suitable. But even here the phraseology, "dear Jesus," and much more, "sweet Jesus," is still objectionable. The difference in this case is, that Jesus is a *name*, while Saviour and Redeemer are *titles*. According to the present usage of language, it would be respectful for a child, in speaking to a parent, to say, "dear father," but not to say, "dear Samuel." We fear there is a prevalent tendency among Christians, at the present time, to approach God with much less of reverence and godly fear than was felt by holy men of old.

3. It is further essential to good style in this species of composition, that all the *imagery and comparisons be chaste and dignified*. If the objects introduced in comparison, metaphor or illustration, be refined and elevated, the effect will be proportionably favorable to devotional feeling. But a reference

to any thing frivolous, diminutive or vulgar, degrades the subject, and devotional effect is either essentially impaired, or destroyed entirely.

4. Our last remark, under this division of our subject, is, that every thing should be avoided, which is likely to produce *low* or *indelicate associations*. Many subjects, which might be appropriately mentioned at some times and places, not only seem out of place, when referred to in public worship, but bring up, by association, other objects, which are still more objectionable. Expressions which, in some states of society, or with some classes of individuals, would be unexceptionable, under different circumstances might instantly be associated with something ludicrous or vulgar. And no allusions or phraseology, which the present tastes or mode of education connect with any thing objectionable, should be admitted, simply because they wore no unsuitable aspect in a former age.

We propose now to inquire how far the collections of hymns in general use will bear to be tested by the principles which we have endeavored to maintain. In making extracts for this purpose, it would be exceedingly pleasant to introduce some of the richer specimens of lyric poetry, with which our language is honored; to dwell upon their glowing beauty, and the fervor and tenderness of their devotional spirit. But as it is our primary object to ascertain how far *amendment* is needed, we cannot, in a reasonable space, do justice to our purpose, unless we limit our quotations mostly, if not entirely, to those specimens which we consider as objectionable.

We make the largest number of extracts from Dr. Watts, because he has written more lyric poetry than any one other writer in the English language, and because his hymns constitute a very considerable part of all the collections in general use.\*

We begin with such stanzas as assert or imply false sentiments. And we quote first, some which have reference to the character of God.

The following is from one of Watts's hymns on the influence of a Mediator:

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\* Regarding Watts's Psalmody as a whole, there was much of truth in a remark of Dr. Johnson respecting it, that "he had done *best*, what nobody had done *well*." A considerable share, however, of the finest lyric poetry in the language has been written since the time of this comment.

"Rich were the drops of Jesus's blood,  
That calmed his frowning face,—  
That sprinkled o'er the burning throne,  
And turned the wrath to grace."

[108, b. ii.\*

The Scriptures teach, that the death of Christ altered the *condition of transgressors*, in respect to the divine law. But it is here asserted (comparing this stanza with the two preceding), that the death of Christ altered God's displeasure against sin; whereas, his death is the strongest possible proof of the permanency of that displeasure, which could be exhibited before an intelligent universe. The passage also implies, that there is a collision between his justice, and his mercy through Christ; while, in reality, all the divine attributes are in perfect harmony. It is, at least, liable to convey an impression, that men may sin with less danger under the gospel than under the law. The scriptural doctrine is, that he who contemns the blood of the new covenant "shall be thought worthy of much sorer punishment" than "he who despised Moses's law."

But we have another equally strong objection to this passage. Its imagery misrepresents the character of God's anger. God's indignation against sin is a *deliberate* and *holy* displeasure, arising from an exact knowledge of its awful atrocity. But the expressions here are just such as we should use in speaking of a person in a fit of ungovernable passion. If God could be in a *rage*, we might think it desirable, that some one should step forward, who could "*calm* his face," and "sprinkle o'er the burning throne." Just so far as this stanza exerts any influence upon the minds of impenitent men, it must blunt their moral sensibility, and enfeeble their impressions of the holiness and goodness of God's displeasure against sin.

Much in the same spirit is the whole hymn 42, b. i. We give a couplet of the second stanza:

"Almighty vengeance, how it burns!  
How bright his fury glows!!"

And if we should add, Throw on water,—how it hisses!! it would be very much in keeping with the rest. Can any man reflect upon such phraseology, without feeling, that it is painfully degrading to the solemn subject of which it professes to

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\* We make all our references to Watts, simply by the number of the book and of the hymn or psalm.

speak? More passages might be convicted of the same fault, in a greater or less degree; but these are a sufficient specimen.

The following couplet, though of kindred character, touches a somewhat different subject:

“Quite weary is my patience grown,  
And bids my fury go.”

[29, b. ii.

“Hath God [then] forgotten to be gracious?” “Is his mercy clean gone for ever?” Transgressors may indeed be left by the Holy Spirit to their own chosen course; but never, while life lasts, is it too late for the returning sinner to meet the long-suffering patience of God.

We quote again:

“Let proud, imperious kings  
Bow low before his throne;  
Crouch to his feet, ye haughty things,  
Or he shall tread you down.”

[80, b. ii.

In singing this, professedly as an act of worship, each one who joins assumes, as if he were in the place of God, the language of insolent command to his fellow-man. And Jehovah is represented as a sovereign, stalking forth in lordly pride, to trample upon the necks of those who do not cringe with abject servility. Is it fitting for sinful man to assume such a tone towards his fellow? Is this the paternal character of God? Will he accept the extorted prostration of a trembling slave, instead of the humble, grateful adoration of a penitent child?

No idea respecting God has probably a stronger hold upon the minds of men generally in Christian lands, than that he is necessarily and eternally existent. His ever-living, ever-present power is so distinctly stamped upon all created objects, that the immortality which belongs to human souls is, for unspeakably stronger reasons, *felt* to be an attribute of Jehovah. And any one may imagine the shock which it would give to his feelings, if, in a thoughtful moment, he should hear the assertion, *God is dead*. It seems impossible, that even any mode of the divine condescension should ever, for a moment, have reconciled a Christian mind to the expression of such an idea. And yet it is distinctly and emphatically asserted, in a book which has been constantly used by thousands, in the worship of God, for more than a century. Who has not heard the stanza,



"Well might the sun in darkness hide,  
And shut his glories in,  
When *God, the mighty Maker, died,*  
For man the creature's sin?"

[9, b. ii.

It may, perhaps, be asserted, that what is really *meant* by the third line is true; and that, properly understood, it does not, therefore, inculcate any false sentiment. Suppose this were granted; does even that concession justify so gross a misuse of language?

How far such phraseology has actually communicated or confirmed false ideas, we will not here stop to ascertain. But we know a case, in which a minister of the gospel carried out this expression to its legitimate result, by speaking of our Saviour's body as "*the corpse of God.*" The idea is horrible.

Though "Christ crucified" is the great theme of all the New Testament writers, and though they frequently allude to the fact, that "the Word" (who "tabernacled in flesh") "was God," yet they never, in any case, connect the sufferings of the crucifixion with any exclusive attribute of divinity. There is not a single expression in all the New Testament, which bears any resemblance to the one before us. When the apostles refer to the death of Christ, they usually speak of him either as the man Jesus, as Christ, the anointed one, or as the Son of God. We have "boldness to enter into the holiest by the *blood of Jesus.*" "This *man*, after he had offered *one sacrifice* for sins, for ever sat down at the right hand of God." "*Christ died* for the ungodly." "*Christ died* for our sins." "The *blood of Jesus Christ, his Son*, cleanseth us." "We were reconciled to God by the *death of his Son.*" These extracts furnish a specimen of their constant manner of speaking on the subject.

We do, indeed, fully believe, that the importance of Christ's sufferings was, in some way, unspeakably enhanced by the supernal glory of his character. But the Scriptures no where tolerate, for a moment, the idea, that Jehovah has ever been subject to death or change, even when "all the fulness of the Godhead" dwelt in him who was sacrificed for us.

We conclude, therefore, that the natural and obvious sentiment of that part of the stanza which we have italicized, is wholly unscriptural, and grossly inconsistent with the spiritual nature of God. And its influence has probably been more widely injurious, because the rest of the hymn—if we except

the second stanza—unites, in a more than usual degree, correct sentiment with poetical character and a highly devotional spirit.

We have dwelt upon the sentiment of this single line so much longer than upon any other point, not only on account of its obvious importance, but because we have heard a defence of the passage attempted ; and because it stands in the front rank of a considerable number of similar character. We quote only the following :

“With tears of joy, I’d sing the God,  
Who wept, and groaned, and died for me.”

*Collection of Rev. S. P. Hill, 499.*

“Behold a God descends and dies,  
To save my soul from gaping hell.”

[21, b. ii.

And again :

“Jesus, the dead, revives again,  
The rising God forsakes the tomb.”

[209, *W. Sup.*

Beside this last, it may be well just to place, for comparison, the language of the apostle Paul : “Jesus Christ — declared to be *the Son of God* — by the resurrection from the dead.” (Rom. 1 : 4.)

We are here reminded of the manner in which the inspired writers use the terms *Son* and *Jesus*, when applied to Christ, and of the different usage that obtains in many hymns, with which some of our readers are familiar.

We have already said, that the term *Jesus* is a *name*. It was given as such to the child at his birth. In its original form, it is an abbreviation of the Hebrew name, *Joshua*. The relatives and acquaintances of Christ used it in speaking of him, just as they did the name of any other person. And it was applied in like manner by all the New Testament writers. We object, therefore, to the use of this term, especially in connection with other phraseology alluding to his humanity, when he is referred to as God. Yet the expression, “Jesus, my God,” is of not unfrequent occurrence. In hymn 103, b. i., beginning,

“I’m not ashamed to own my Lord,”

it occurs in close connection with a reference to his humiliation and cross :

“Jesus, my God, I know his name,” &c.

By a similar use of terms, Watts has several times the expression, *eternal Son*. If we have not mistaken the import of the passage, 1 Cor. 15: 28, Paul teaches, that while his divine character is eternal, his sonship is something distinct from it, and of *limited* duration.

We had marked a considerable number of passages expressing erroneous views upon other subjects. But we shall quote only two or three.

“Adam, our father and our head,  
Transgressed, and justice doomed us dead.”

[77, *W. Sup.*

If *dead* here mean what the Scriptures mean by the phrase, “dead in *trespasses* and *sins*,” and if the couplet were only intended to assert, that, in consequence of our relation to our first parents, our nature is so corrupted, that we all naturally love to sin, in spite of reason and conscience, we should readily admit the fact, as one taught in the Bible, and confirmed by observation. And we should find something analogous to it in that arrangement of Providence, by which the children of a drunkard, even though they may know the path of duty, have stronger temptations to vice, and greater liability to ruin, than those of industrious and exemplary parents. But the expression, “*justice doomed us*,” taken in connection with the rest of the stanza, asserts, in reality, a very different doctrine; —that we experience sufferings visited upon us *as a penalty* for Adam’s transgression; —that *we* are condemned to *punishment* for *his* sin. This is a doctrine under which guilty men, in all ages, have sought to cover their own criminality. It is identically the same sentiment, —though applied to a more remote progenitor, —for which God denounced the ancient Israelites, by his prophet Ezekiel. “What mean ye [saith the Lord], that ye use this proverb? The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children’s teeth are set on edge. As I live, saith the Lord, — the soul that sinneth, — [that one] shall die.” Ezekiel 18: 2—4.

The stanza before us is worse, in one respect, than the Jewish proverb. *That* falsely asserted, that the divine administration embraced a certain principle, which the testimony of God and conscience alike condemned. *This* not only makes the same false assertion, but declares the principle to be “*justice*.”

The following is from a hymn on "the eternity of God:"

"Long ere the lofty skies were spread,  
Jehovah filled his throne;  
Or Adam formed, or angels made,  
*The Maker lived alone.*"

[17, b. ii.

We are not disposed to assert, that the statement of this last line is false; because revelation is profoundly silent upon this subject, and nothing else can give us any certain information respecting it. Either to affirm or to deny its truth, in positive terms, would, therefore, be equally unphilosophical. But, for this very reason, we object to such an unqualified assertion,—especially in a hymn to be used in the worship of God,—even if it could be shown, that there is not a particle of evidence against its probability. We think, however, that there is, at least, some analogical evidence in favor of a contrary supposition.

All that God has hitherto seen fit to teach us, respecting his character and works, renders it probable, that it is his pleasure constantly to fill the whole universe with dependent life and happiness; and with as *much* of happiness as can exist, consistently with the exercise of accountable agency. Does it then seem probable, that unnumbered ages rolled away without one created object in the boundless abyss of space?

As if impelled by a moral instinct lying *back* of all reasonings, we remember to have felt, almost within our boyish years, an involuntary shrinking from the bare idea, that countless ages had passed away before there was one trace of created happiness; while there was no spirit to feel the love, and no single voice to utter the praise, of infinite goodness. Will it be said, that *however remote* we suppose the *commencement* of creation, there was still an eternity before that? We are, indeed, reminded, that the Scriptures speak of a "beginning," *in* which God created the heavens and the earth. But where has he told us, that the work of creation itself *had a commencement*? In mathematics, we talk of an infinite series of finite quantities. Where, then, is the absurdity of supposing an infinite succession of creating acts? If creative power be an *attribute* of Jehovah, and if Jehovah have *always existed*, may he not *always* have been creating?

But we are aware, that we are treading upon the verge of "a region beyond the limits of the human understanding;"



that we are, at least, in the neighborhood of ground, where a just view of human ignorance should have taught some writers to cherish less of confidence, and to speak with more of becoming modesty. We repeat the declaration of our incapacity to arrive at any certain knowledge on the point of which we have been speaking, without a revelation, which our heavenly Father has not seen fit to make. And we, therefore, again utter our protest against allowing a place in church psalmody to a doubtful assertion, which, we believe, must produce an unpleasant revulsion in many minds.

The quotation following is from the common metre versification of the 13th Psalm:

"Make haste, before my eyes are sealed  
In death's eternal sleep."

The last line was intended, without doubt, to be interpreted as an hyperbole. Still, it is not a little remarkable, that a Christian hymn, addressed directly to the eternal God, should contain the very language in which the infidels of France denied the existence of any future state.\*

We extract but one more passage on account of incorrect sentiment:

"In the world of endless ruin,  
Let it never, Lord, be said,  
Here's a soul that perished suing  
For the boasted Saviour's aid."

The whole hymn, in which this occurs, is characterized by highly impassioned feeling. And we suppose this stanza was intended only to express an urgent appeal to the Saviour, like that by which Jacob prevailed, when he wrestled with God. Still, the language is highly objectionable. Its tone is not sufficiently reverential, especially for one who comes to acknowledge guilt, and supplicate pardon. *It implies, that if the prayer be not granted, there will be occasion for charging the failure to a deficiency in God's mercy, or in the efficacy of the atonement.*

Such an impression must be highly dangerous to an awakened impenitent sinner. And persons of that class will be very likely to adopt this language, when they ought to use

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\* The summary creed of infidel France, in the time of the Revolution, was expressed in the single sentence, "There is no God but reason, and death is an eternal sleep."

that of the humble publican,—when their first duty is submission in the dust before God.

The charge of deficiency in God's mercy, which, in this stanza, is hypothetically attributed to lost spirits, may be, and probably sometimes is, adopted by hardened sinners on earth, to justify their continued impenitence. But "in the world of endless ruin," every mouth will be stopped, and all its inhabitants be acknowledged guilty before God.

There is one entire though small class of Watts's hymns, which demands a notice, in closing our references to examples under this head. We refer to those in which he professes to give the sentiment and spirit of "Solomon's Song." They extend from the 66th to the 78th hymn, inclusive, of the first book.

There is one respect in which we regard the whole group as inculcating erroneous sentiment. They are all based upon what we believe to be a misconception of the real import and design of that book. Watts and others have regarded it as an allegorical poem, intended, under the emblem of a bridegroom and a bride, to represent Christ and his church, and the mutual relation and love subsisting between the Redeemer and his redeemed. And these hymns, while they borrow all their imagery from the "Song," are constructed with express reference to that opinion. But there are strong objections to this view of the book, which furnish reason for supposing, that it was written with probable reference to some of the personages and circumstances of the writer's own time, and that it was designed mainly to celebrate the happiness resulting from conjugal fidelity and affection. If this opinion be correct, these hymns lend their influence to a misinterpretation of the book. And whether it be or not, there can be no valid reason for constructing such a number of hymns upon a *doubtful* basis, while there are so many well established facts and truths nearer home, by which the same subject can be more impressively illustrated. It is, besides, a distinct and independent objection to these hymns, that their general complexion is too *amorous* for a dignified illustration of so exalted a subject. Some of them, at least, have too much of the language of earthly passion, to represent fitly the spiritual and immortal bloom of the love of heaven.

We turn now to some of those passages, whose sentiments, however true, are unfit to be *sung in public worship*. And

as we have already, in respect to several classes of hymns, expressed the reasons of such unfitness, comparatively little more is necessary here, than to give a few specimens.

We have before referred, in general terms, to the versifications of the 22d and of the 69th Psalms. We take one stanza from each of them :

“From earth and hell my sorrows meet,  
To multiply the smart;  
They nail my hands, they pierce my feet,  
And try to vex my heart.”

[22, 1st part.

This purports to be the language of Christ, while upon the cross. If singing be a suitable method of expressing its sentiment forcibly, it must certainly have been as suitable in that affecting moment as now. Let us, then, imagine the Saviour striking some familiar tune, and giving musical utterance to this account of his sufferings. Supposing any person expiring under the tortures of crucifixion, is it not grossly unnatural, even to represent him as uttering the anguish of his last mortal strife in measure and rhyme? But to represent him, or any one of his friends even, as *singing* it \* \* \* \* \* We only ask to have this perfectly imagined, and we will not desire another syllable of comment.

“Wretches, with hearts as hard as stones,  
Insult his piety and groans;  
Gall was the food they gave him there,  
And mocked his thirst with vinegar.”

[69, 2d part, L. M.

This passage contains neither poetry nor devotion, nor even a dignified account of the Saviour's sufferings. And of the eight stanzas, which the piece contains, not a solitary one is really adapted to the musical part of public worship.

We quote another, which, though more poetical, is of the same style of sentiment :

“O, call to mind thine earnest prayers!  
Thine agony and sweat of blood!  
Thy strong and bitter cries and tears!”

[Col. of Rev. S. P. Hill, 228.

The next extract is from a hymn entitled “*Public Fast* : ”

“Such crimson tincture dyes our sin,  
That, could we all its horrors know,  
*Our streaming eyes with blood might flow.*”

We take the following from the "Church Psalmody," compiled by Messrs. Mason and Greene:

"See human beings *sunk in shame*;  
See scandals poured on Jesus's name;  
See *God insulted through his Son*;  
The world abused—the soul undone."

[Hymn 60.]

This, though less exceptionable, perhaps, than the preceding quotation, is quite unfit for ordinary sacred music.

The two following extracts are from pieces in the Baltimore collection, by Rev. S. P. Hill, under the head of "*Penitence and Confession*:"

"Oh! pleasures past, what are ye now,  
But thorns about my bleeding brow?  
*Spectres that hover round my brain,*  
And aggravate and mock my pain?

\* \* \* \*

Now, justice, let thy thunder roll!  
Now, *vengeance smile*, and with a blow,  
Lay the rebellious ingrate low."

[220.]

"I tremble, lest the wrath divine,  
Which bruises now my sinful soul,  
Should bruise this wretched soul of mine  
Long as eternal ages roll."

[223.]

We regard the sentiment of this last extract as correct, and the emotion expressed entirely natural and suitable for one who has just come to see the enormity of his sins. But no sentiment can be *devotionally* sung, unless it is really felt. And we only say, let any one **FEEL** the assertion of this passage, and then attempt to *sing* it.

Our remaining extracts, under this head, have reference, more or less, directly to the miseries of lost spirits:

"*My thoughts on awful subjects roll,*  
*Damnation and the dead.*"

[2, b. ii.]

Will any one, who has a tolerable knowledge of music, just pause and think deliberately of each important word in these two lines, and then say, *what sort* of MUSIC should be set to such a couplet? For ourselves, we should be inclined to catch the notes from some broad, massive prison-gate, slowly, on its iron hinges, grating hoarse thunder.



"How the black gulf, where Satan lies,  
Yawned to receive me, when I fell!"

[21, b. ii.

Here the imagery presents a man falling; and a pit of destruction, whose unmeasured depths even the rays of light cannot reach, suddenly opens beneath him, like the jaws of some horrid monster, to engulf him for ever. If imagination should for a moment realize the picture described in the word "*yawned*," who would think, that any musical notes were fit for the sanctuary, which could adequately express its terrific import?

In respect to their prominent characteristic, the two succeeding quotations require no comment:

"But vengeance and damnation lies  
On rebels, who refuse the grace;  
Who God's eternal Son despise,  
The hottest hell shall be their place."

[100, b. i.

"Curst be the man, for ever curst,  
That doth one wilful sin commit;  
Death and damnation for the first,  
Without relief and infinite."

[14, *W. Sup.*

Their main feature, however, is so glaring as to throw *every thing else* into the shade; and we, therefore, just call attention to the fact, that the former is ungrammatical, and that it contains the expression, *eternal Son*, on which we have remarked before.

It were easy to multiply twenty-fold our quotations under this head; but we give only one more passage of this description:

"Awake and mourn, ye heirs of hell,  
\* \* \* \* \*  
See how the pit gapes wide for you,  
And flashes in your face."

[52, b. ii.

How convenient! A hymn prepared and finished to preach as well as to be sung. *To preach to the heirs of hell!!* If it be *settled*, that any man or demon is an heir of hell, of *what use* to preach to him? *To what good purpose*, indeed, can *any* person be addressed in such magisterial and condemnatory language as this? But who are the "heirs of hell?" Man's season of probation extends to the latest hour of his life; and

"*whosoever will*, [may] take of the water of life freely." What mortal, then, has a right to address his fellow-man by such an appellation? It would have suited very well the character of the ancient Pharisees, to sing the first two of these lines to the robbers crucified with Christ. But he, who is rich in mercy, was pleased to say to one of them, "To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise."

We have heretofore observed one or more passages in Watts that we do not now succeed in finding, in which "papists" are referred to by name; and the person, reading or singing the hymn, disparagingly contrasts their hopes and faith with his own. Now, we have no doubt, that papists, as such, are the advocates of some egregious and dangerous errors. But to mention them, or any other class of persons, with censure, in a *devotional* service, is offensive in the extreme. Such an allusion to others, in any act of worship, deserves a place with the Pharisee's prayer: "God, I thank thee, that I am not — even as this publican."

We think it suitable here, before we pass to the examination of defects in *style*, to make a *general remark* respecting the sentiment of those pieces which profess to be versifications of the book of Psalms. Although they comprise many of the best pieces in use, yet we think they also contain many more specimens of sentiment unsuitable for Christian worship, than an equal number of the best hymns now extant.

Indeed, there are two obvious facts, in respect to the book of Psalms, which furnish a strong *a priori* reason for expecting, that such would be the result of any attempt to versify them all. One of these facts is, that only a small portion of the Psalms were originally written *for the purpose* of being sung in public worship. A very considerable part of them, indeed, are either recitals of the personal history and private joys and griefs of pious men, or expressions of the prayer and praise called forth by their private circumstances. Others were *prophecies*; and a few were probably written for the express purpose of being sung in the temple services.

The other fact, to which we referred, is, that many of the Psalms are marked by the distinctive features and spirit of that dispensation among the Jews, in which God "*suffered*" many things "because of the hardness of [their] hearts;"—a dispensation which was done away through the "bringing in of a *better* covenant," by the High Priest of the *Christian* profession.

David, although a pious man and an inspired prophet, was informed by God, that he had shed too much blood to be allowed to build a temple to his name. And many of his Psalms, though they indicate a stern zeal for the honor of Jehovah, have still too much of warlike imagery and spirit to harmonize readily with the infinite benevolence of the gospel, and the *tender mercies* of the Prince of peace.

Considering, then, the peculiar features of these productions, and the great variety of purposes and occasions for which they were written, could we reasonably have hoped, that any attempt would be successful in giving them all one general character, and adapting every variety of sentiment to one single purpose? What else could we have expected, *in many cases*, but a sad distortion of their own beautiful conceptions and imagery, and an utter failure to adapt them to a purpose for which they were never designed?

We come now to examine more particularly the *dress* and *exterior aspect* of the church psalmody at present in general use.

In respect to those violations of propriety, which belong rather to the *drapery* than to the substance of lyric poetry, there have been, in the best collections, some decided improvements, from the time of the issuing of our present translation of the Scriptures. This has been particularly the case, in excluding such expressions as were wanting in proper *delicacy*. Pieces were formerly in constant use in the congregations of England and Scotland, so *coarse* that they would hardly be tolerated any where, at the present day.

But, of a somewhat different style of hymns,—which, for want of a more graphic term, we denominate *low*,—abundant specimens are in use even now, in some parts of this country; particularly in those collections which are technically called *Conference Hymns*, intended for social worship of a less formal character than that of the public services on the Sabbath. In these books, and some of similar stamp, we may find pieces of as miserable *stuff* as ever obtained a place among the wares of a street ballad-monger.

Take the following examples as a specimen:

“Do n’t you see my Jesus a coming?  
Do n’t you see him in yonder cloud,  
With ten thousand saints and angels?  
O, how they do my Jesus crowd!”

[*Benedict’s Conference Hymns*, 57.

"O, what a glorious mystery,—wonder, wonder, wonder,  
That I should ever saved be; wonder, wonder, wonder,  
No heart can think, no tongue can tell, wonder, wonder, wonder,  
The love of God unchangeable; wonder, wonder, wonder."

[*Ibid.*, 67.]

Two or three of the best hymn books, very recently compiled, are greatly in advance of all their predecessors this side of the Atlantic. But there is still abundant room for improvement in the style of a great part of the church psalmody in general circulation.

The hymns which are deficient in poetic merit, or in propriety and beauty of imagery and illustration, constitute a very large and various class. We bespeak the patience of our readers, while we furnish a few examples of each of the more important classes of these defects.

Not a few quotations might be furnished, containing violations of the elementary rules of grammar or of rhetoric. We refer to two or three of the latter character, which contain an incongruous mixing of metaphor in the same sentence.

"He shakes the earth from north to south,  
And all her *pillars mourn*."

[86, b. i.]

We can conceive of animals weeping, of sensitive beings generally as mourning, and of the pillars which support a fabric as trembling, tottering or falling; but we never heard elsewhere of *pillars mourning*.

"Our reason stretches all its *wings*,  
And *climbs* above the skies."

[87, b. ii.]

We use *hands* or *feet* to climb; and the proper function of *wings* is *flying* or *soaring*.

The following is quite a nondescript:

"The Lord of glory builds his seat  
Of gems incomparably bright,  
And lays beneath his sacred feet  
Substantial beams of gloomy night."

*Substantial beams of gloomy night!!* What a foundation!  
Verily, this is making *rays of darkness* with a *reality*.

The remaining specimen is from a hymn on "*hardness of heart*:"



"Dear Saviour, *steep* this rock of mine  
 In thine own crimson *sea*;  
 None but a *bath* of blood divine  
 Can *melt* the flint away."

[98, b. ii.]

The metaphor here is throughout strained and unnatural; and it is not congruous with itself in any two different lines. The blood of Christ is, in the first line, a digesting liquid, in which the rock is to be *steeped*; in the next, it is a sea; in the next, a bath; and in the last, if language be used *strictly*, it is a fire sufficiently intense to "*melt*" flint, or, in a looser use of language, a solvent capable of melting [dissolving] flint. Beside all this, we have here "divine blood," or, what is the same thing, *blood of God*.

These rhetorical defects, where a hymn is in other respects good, and fraught with fervent devotional feeling, are, indeed, of minor consequence. But they are blemishes still, and such, too, as impair the effect which the hymn was intended to produce.

We quote now a mere sample of the numerous passages, in which we confess, that we are wholly unable to discover any of the features of genuine poetry. And in order that their real character may be more conveniently seen, we shall take the liberty to strip off their covering of capitals, and write them in a continuous line, leaving it to the ingenuity and shrewdness of our readers to conjecture what lengths are to be measured off, and how it should be cut up, to form the requisite stanzas. We have room only to quote single sentences; although many whole hymns need to be seen, in order to have an adequate view of this defect.

"In times of general distress, some beams of light shall shine to show the world his righteousness." [Ps. 112, C. M.]

"By his own power were all things made; by him supported, all things stand; he is the whole creation's head." [2, b. i.]

"Religion never was designed to make our pleasures less."

[30, b. ii.]

We should suppose these two last extracts to be grave passages from some sermon or dissertation.

Now a sentence of history:

"He spake, and bid [bade] four thousand years roll on; at length his Son appears; angels with joy descend to earth," &c. [107, b. i.]

The following might be taken for a quaintly expressed article from some confession of faith :

"By the rebellion of one man, through all his seed the mischief ran ; and by one man's obedience now are all *his* seed made righteous too." [124, b. i.

Now, instead of this, we take the liberty to recommend the following, from the apostle Paul. It is more beautiful, and more forcible, and quite as poetical ; and, besides, it contains exactly syllables enough to make a long metre stanza :

"As by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous." [Rom. 5: 19.

Indeed, so far as a poetic spirit is concerned, almost any passage in the doctrinal part of the epistle to the Romans might be as appropriately set to church music, as a considerable number of hymns to which we could easily refer.

We shall close this motley list of quotations, which we fear have already become tedious, with a few specimens of those passages in which the imagery is not sufficiently chaste and dignified.

The following, besides the fault under consideration, is as little entitled to the name of poetry as some of our last quotations :

"But man, vain man, would fain be wise ;  
Born like a wild young colt, he flies  
Through all the follies of his mind,  
And smells and snuffs the empty wind."

[170, b. ii.

The comparison, in the extent of detail to which it is carried, is too ludicrous and too much connected with *low* associations, to be fit either for the solemnity of the sanctuary, or for the serious assertion of human guilt and folly, which it is intended to contain.

Another :

"Eagles and bears and whales and worms  
Rejoice and praise in different forms."

[Ps. 104, L. M.

The objects here referred to are all suitable enough in their place ; and, when properly studied, they are, indeed, all seen to be monuments of the wisdom and goodness of God. But the grouping together of such a motley mass, from earth, and heaven, and sea,—some of which, under ordinary circum-

stances, are objects of terror, and others of disgust,—presents an offensive picture to the imagination, that will be almost certain to crowd out of sight the important truth, which is dressed in this repulsive garb.

These two quotations may be taken as samples of a numerous class.

The imagery of the following is deserving of special attention, as having respect to the Supreme Being:

“God, that must stoop to view the skies,  
And bow to see what angels do,  
Down to the earth he casts his eyes,  
And bends his footsteps downward too.”

[46, b. ii.

The Scriptures figuratively speak of the *eyes of the Lord* as in every place; of the heavens as the work of *his hands*; of *his footsteps* in the mighty deep. But in all these cases, the mention of corporeal parts is connected with exalted acts of omnipotent power, and the association is dignified. Notwithstanding the figure, we still feel, that God is an infinite Spirit.

But in the stanza before us, the terms *stoop* and *bow*, both occurring in the same sentence, and both properly describing either a laborious or a humiliating motion of the body, *urge* upon the imagination a corporeal picture, which, at best, does not exalt the subject. Then, in coming to the third line, the prolongation of the figure, and the singular infelicity of the expression, “*casts his eyes*,” aggravate the first effect upon the imagination. And the last line fairly caps the climax, by a phraseology which necessarily implies either labor or decrepitude. So that a person of quick perception and imagination cannot attentively hear or read through the stanza, without having before his mind a picture of some old or wearied man travelling downward as well as circumstances will permit. A constantly present sense of the spirituality of God may, indeed, save him from giving distinctness to the features of such a picture. But it will only be at the expense of a mental effort, which will destroy all devotional feeling, and make him disgusted with the language before him.

In the hymn immediately preceding the one from which we have just quoted, and on the same subject, we have another passage, which is liable, though in a less degree, to the same objection:

"Still might he fill his starry throne,  
And *please his ears* with Gabriel's songs."  
[45, b. ii.]

In the few remaining extracts, we object to the figures and allusions, as likely to produce indelicate or repulsive associations; than which, nothing can be more fatal to true devotional feeling.

"My Saviour's *pierced side*  
Poured out a *double flood*;  
By *water* we are purified,  
And pardoned by the *blood*."  
[9, b. iii.]

So we are here to think of the gore which runs out of a *dead body*, and of being washed in it.

The next also refers to Christ:

"Now, on the throne of his command,  
His *legs* like marble pillars stand."  
[75, b. i.]

"Go, saith the Lord, *my Gabriel*, go;  
*Salute* the virgin's fruitful *womb*."  
[18, b. ii.]

"With joy we meditate the grace  
Of our High Priest above;  
His heart is made of tenderness,  
His *bowels melt* with love."  
[125, b. i.]

The phraseology of the last two lines of this stanza presents a grosser picture to the mind than can be found in any passage where the Bible uses the term *bowels* to denote the seat of the affections. But there are reasons why even the scriptural usage of this word is not suitable for a hymn. The character of the Holy Scriptures is so exalted, that they can stamp something of their own dignity and solemnity upon an expression, which, in ordinary or poetical usage, would appear deformed and repulsive. There is, however, a stronger reason, why the example of the Scriptures does not, in this case, confer propriety upon the same usage any where else. The peculiar use of this term in the Bible was derived from another meaning, which does not at all belong to it in common usage at the present day. Its use is now restricted to the viscera of the abdomen, and almost always to those which are below the stomach. Formerly, it was used to denote all the viscera,



both of the abdomen and thorax,—the whole *inward parts*, including the heart and lungs.

The original word, which is translated *bowels*, was used in this extensive signification. And whenever the inward parts were figuratively represented as being affected, in order to denote *love, tenderness, or anxiety*, the word always had special reference to the upper part of the body, and denoted the heart and lungs, or these and the liver.\* And these organs were popularly regarded as the seat of the affections, in the same manner as we now regard the *heart alone*, when we speak of a man as *hardhearted, heartless, or having his heart softened*. So that the original word, when referring to these organs collectively, is of similar import to our word *breast*. And as, in ordinary speaking, we have entirely done using the word *bowels* to denote the viscera in the upper part of the body, it ceases to convey any such idea as the words *breast* and *heart*, and therefore fails of justly representing the original. Indeed, had the signification of the word been limited, as it now is, two hundred and fifty years ago, the authors of our present version of the Scriptures would never have used it in translating those passages where the original term occurs in this figurative sense. Instead of "My bowels were moved for him" (Cant. 5: 4), they would have said, "My *bosom* heaved for him." In the place of "Ye are straitened in your own bowels" (2 Cor. 6: 12), they would have given us, "Ye are straitened in your own breasts." In fact, they actually did, in a number of cases, decline the use of the term then, and introduced a different phraseology.†

We have been the more minute in stating the origin of this particular usage of language, because it seems to claim the sanction of the Scriptures, and has been extensively introduced into almost all the hymn books we have ever examined. In

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\* That there was, in all such cases, primary reference to these viscera, and particularly to the heart, is indeed sufficiently evident from several passages in our common version of the Bible, where "heart" and "bowels" are used as almost synonymous terms.

"My bowels! my bowels! I am pained at my very heart;  
My heart maketh a noise in me—I cannot hold my peace."  
[Jer. 4: 19.]

"Behold, O Lord! for I am in distress; my bowels are troubled;  
Mine heart is turned within me," &c.  
[Lam. 1: 20.]

See also Lam. 2: 11; Ps. 22: 14.

† See Prov. 12: 10; Luke 1: 78; 2 Cor. 7: 15.

Watts's alone, we could easily refer to a greater number of places where it occurs than all the similar ones in the New Testament put together.

We think it must, however, appear sufficiently obvious, that the occurrence of this usage in a few passages of Scripture, under such circumstances, furnishes no valid reason whatever for introducing the word into church psalmody. It invariably presents to the mind an unseemly object, which the sacred writers never contemplated in such a connection. It is not at all adapted to suggest those mental affections, for which the metaphor is professedly used; and it is likely to awaken associations, which, to say the least, are any thing but poetical. It ought, unquestionably, to be expunged from every passage.

We subjoin several more examples of the manner in which it is used:

"Behold the love, the generous love,  
That holy David shows;  
HARK! how his *sounding* bowels move  
To his afflicted foes."

[Ps. 35, 2d part.

"*Hark!*" lest some strains of this *dulcet music* should be lost.

"'T is a Father's bowels move,  
Move with pardon and with love."

[Col. of Rev. S. P. Hill, 217.

"Now, by the bowels of my God,  
His sharp distress, his sore complaints,  
By his last groans, his dying blood,  
I charge my soul to love the saints."

[130, b. i.

*Bowels of God!* is worst of all. But here we have it; and, as if this alone were not sufficiently gross, God's *complaints*, God's *distress*, the *dying blood* and the LAST GROANS of GOD are brought in to finish out the picture. If this be not an outrage against reverence, *propriety*, DECENCY, we know not what to call such.

Have not the quotations, with which this article is loaded, and uncounted pages more of a similar character, occupied long enough the desk and the seats of the sanctuary? After what has been exhibited, we believe it would be quite a needless labor, to offer any elaborate general remarks on the neces-

sity of expurgation and amendment in our prevailing collections. We hope the time may not be distant, when the business shall be undertaken by some able and skilful hand.

Each of the authors from whom we have taken extracts has written more or less of *good* psalmody,—some of them a very considerable number of pieces. Probably about one half of the matter of Watts's versification of the Psalms, and about two-fifths of all his other lyric pieces, are worthy to be retained in a collection for public worship. From various other authors, of past and recent times, there can be selected a sufficient additional amount of good English lyric poetry to furnish a tasteful and adequate collection, that shall well deserve a place at the domestic altar, in the social assembly, and in the house of God.

We repeat the expression of our hope, that the time may soon arrive, when a compilation shall be prepared, worthy, in its sentiments and poetical character, to be adopted by the Baptist denomination throughout this extended republic.

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## ARTICLE XII.

### HISTORY OF MISSIONS.

*The Origin and History of Missions; a Record of the Voyages, Travels, Labors and Successes of the various Missionaries who have been sent forth by Protestant Societies and Churches to evangelize the Heathen; compiled from authentic Documents; forming a complete Missionary Repository; illustrated by numerous Engravings, from original Drawings made expressly for this Work.* By the Rev. JOHN O. CHOULES, A. M., New-Bedford, Mass., and the Rev. THOMAS SMITH, late Minister of Trinity Chapel, London. Fourth edition, continued to the present time. In two volumes. Boston. Gould, Kendall & Lincoln, and Crocker & Brewster. 4to. pp. 622, 610. 1837.

No friend of missions can have forgotten the thrilling language of Mr. Judson, in a letter to the Rev. Mr. Grew, in

1831. Though speaking particularly of Burmah, and of a period very different, in some respects, from the present, yet we quote it again here, because, contemplated on a large scale, it too truly applies to missionary efforts throughout the world: "The fact is, that we are very weak, and have to complain, that hitherto we have not been well supported from home. It is most distressing to find, when we are almost worn out, and are sinking, one after another, into the grave, that many of our brethren in Christ, at home, are just as hard and immovable as rocks; just as cold and repulsive as the mountains of ice in the polar seas. But, whatever they do, we cannot sit still, and see the dear Burmans, flesh and blood like ourselves, and, like ourselves, possessed of immortal souls, that must shine for ever in heaven, or burn for ever in hell,—we cannot see them go down to perdition, without doing our very utmost to save them. And, thanks be to God, our labors are not in vain. We have three lovely churches, and about two hundred baptized converts; and some are in glory. A spirit of religious inquiry is extensively spreading throughout the country, and the signs of the times indicate, that the great renovation of Burmah is drawing near. O, if we had about twenty more versed in the language, and *means to spread schools, and tracts, and Bibles, to any extent*, how happy I should be! But those rocks and those icy mountains have crushed us down for many years."

We do not feel, that any apology is necessary for presenting to our readers the above extract, with which it is hoped many of them are already familiar. The rebuke it conveys, keen as its edge must be to most, will, we fear, be needed by Christians in general for some years to come, as well as now; and it is one which could hardly come with equal force from any other man. But we refer to it now, chiefly with a view to point out the grand cause of the apathy complained of, in the judgment of Mr. Judson himself. "I am persuaded, that the *only* reason why all the dear friends of Jesus in America do not come forward in the support of missions is, *mere want of information*. If they could only see and know half what I do, they would give all their property, and their persons, too."

In this opinion of Mr. Judson, we fully coincide. We do not deny the existence of *covetousness* among Christian churches, but we doubt whether this exists and operates to the extent often supposed. Certainly, this is not the case among the



"friends of Jesus." That there are now a few among us, whose disposition and doom are shadowed out in the history of Ananias and Sapphira, we doubt not, since human nature develops the same tendencies in every age; but these followers of "Mammon" must be distinguished from the "friends of Jesus." Though for a time found *among* them, they are not *of* them; and in churches constituted as ours, we do not believe their numbers are large. In the broad and sweeping censures sometimes pronounced on this subject, we cannot sympathize. We hear them with pain. They can do no good to the cause of benevolence, to the interests of Christianity, or to the individuals concerned. They seem to us oftener the effusions of despondency or spleen, than of sober conscientiousness. How much more wise, as well as generous, was the sentiment uttered by the Psalmist, on a trying occasion: "If I say, I will speak thus, behold, I should offend against the generation of thy children!" Let us abandon these uncharitable judgments. Let the agents of benevolent societies, especially, beware how they use language so nearly akin to that of the infidel and the godless scoffer. Let them leave to another the infamous task and title of an "accuser of the brethren." Let them repose a firm and generous confidence in the Christian liberality of the churches. We cannot stop here to unfold fully the grounds for this confidence, nor to answer all the objections which may be urged against our views; but we are deeply convinced of their soundness, and of the happy consequences that would ensue, if the agents of our various charities, in their appeals, both public and private, were invariably to proceed upon the conviction, or even assumption, of their truth. We mean not to assert, that all Christians will be found alike liberal, or alike ready to aid every form of religious charity. This would be assuming too much. But we mean to say, and to insist, that in the soul of every Christian,—and of such we believe the churches of America are generally composed,—there is a deep vein of solid benevolence, a rich mine of sacred liberality, imbedded there by the divine hand (2 Cor. 8: 1—5), which requires only to be properly wrought, to yield its treasures for every good work, year after year, and age after age. In some, the precious ore may be nearer to the surface than in others, and may require less pains to draw forth its sparkling riches; but he who finds all barren may rest assured, that he is yet deficient in the requisite discernment,

diligence or skill, which, in suitable hands, rarely fail to be crowned with success. When did such men as Andrew Fuller, Samuel Pearce, or Legh Richmond, plead in vain? If the views and motives with which the heart of Paul was so full and overflowing, when he wrote the eighth and ninth chapters of his second epistle to the Corinthians, were equally familiar to the hearts of those who wish to call forth the charities of the churches at the present day, we doubt not that the churches of America would respond, in a way that would again call forth the thanksgivings of their ministers and the admiration of the world. In regard to the missionary cause, especially, we believe, that it has a friend in every Christian *who has had sufficient information* to enlarge his understanding, satisfy his conscience, and rouse his sympathies. We take it to be a great principle, a general rule, admitting but rare exceptions, that every one who loves our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity is willing and desirous, even, to aid in promoting the extension of his kingdom to the ends of the earth, provided he is only *properly informed* upon the subject.

“‘THY KINGDOM COME!’ Oh, who that daily sends  
Love’s strong, deep yearnings in that holy prayer,  
Up to high heaven—as that bright reign extends,  
Feels not a rapture such as angels share?”

That, in many instances, this want of information is culpable, is beyond a doubt. We wish we had sufficient time and space here to enter into a full investigation of its various causes; but as we have not, we shall content ourselves with simply suggesting them, leaving every reader to reflect upon them, and trace them out in the light of his own personal knowledge, observation and experience. For the sake of being more definite, let us confine ourselves, for a moment, to the condition of our own denomination. Let us assume, that we have about half a million of communicants at this moment in our churches in this country; which cannot greatly differ from the fact. The whole sum contributed by these the last year to missionary purposes, in various forms, is about \$150,000, which is an average of thirty cents from each individual. Yet it is highly probable, that one half of our communicants contributed no part of this sum. And why? Did poverty forbid? By no means. The number of donors who are not communicants probably exceeds the number of minors, slaves, and others,

who have no property of their own. We suppose, then, that 250,000 Baptists in the United States contributed nothing last year to missionary purposes, although, on an average, as able as those who did contribute. But why did they take no part in this work of heavenly charity? Do you say, from covetousness, from custom, from misguided conscience? Be it so. These may be, in part, the proximate causes; but we doubt not they can all be traced to the single grand cause suggested by Mr. Judson. *It is the want of adequate information.* Many have enjoyed no advantages of early education. Their minds have had no intellectual enlargement. They have no knowledge even of geography, without which, experience shows, little of distinct and forcible impression can be made of the extent of the missionary field, and the demand for laborers. The experiment of Felix Neff upon his Alpine congregation will here occur to every mind. It shows, in a most striking manner, the close connection of science and religion, and the indispensable importance of giving to all our youth the advantages of early education, in order to open within them the fountains of universal benevolence, when they shall become subjects of divine grace. Alas! it is ignorance, a deplorable, a wide-spread, a culpable ignorance, of the most elementary truths, which shuts up those blessed fountains in the souls of thousands and thousands of sincere and warmhearted Christians.

But how is it with those who have enjoyed the advantages of elementary education, and yet do nothing to promote the cause of Christian missions? We here assume them to be truly pious, and yet indifferent, if not hostile, to the present operations of our benevolent societies to spread the gospel throughout the world. They know the extent of the field. They know "the field is the world." They know the countless tribes and nations into which that world is divided,—their various languages, their diversified forms of government and religion, and different grades of civilization. They know, too, how small a portion of it is yet blest with the light of genuine Christianity, and that unless the age of miracles and of tongues were to return, nay, *even then*, a mighty work yet remains to be accomplished by the church (of which they themselves are actual members), before the world can be fully evangelized, and its kingdoms become constituent portions of the kingdom of Christ. Yet even here we trace their want of cordial interest in this mighty work to the want of adequate information.

They have much yet to learn of the glorious designs of divine mercy to the world ; of the prophecies which assure us of the gathering in of the Jews with the *fulness* of the Gentiles ; of the promised period, when the whole earth, filled with the knowledge of the Lord, shall present to beholding angels and to men the beautiful and affecting spectacle of "one fold under one Shepherd." They have much yet to learn of the means and instrumentalities by which all this is to be brought about ; of the divine employment of human agency, as revealed in the Scriptures ; of the obligations resting on all believers, and therefore on *themselves*, of coöperating in this glorious work ; of the innumerable ways in which they *can* and *ought* to be, like the primitive Christians, "fellow-helpers of the truth," and joint partakers of the joy and triumph of those who are contributing to establish over the whole earth the peaceful kingdom of their Lord. They have yet much to learn of what has been already done by Christian brethren more zealous than themselves ; their voyages to distant climes ; their travels through dangerous regions, and among barbarous tribes ; their labors to acquire their affections, their confidence, their language, in order to do them good, and lead them to the knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus ; their prayers, their watchings, their sufferings, and their success. They have yet much to learn of the present state of the missionary enterprise ; of the existing aspects of the missionary field ; of the new doors opened by the providence of God on every side, to invite the entrance of his servants ; of the evidently gracious preparation of the hearts of many people for the reception of the gospel ; of the happy results, month after month, and day after day, of missionary labor, in the conversion of hundreds and thousands of the heathen from blank atheism, or dumb idols, from the most grovelling superstitions and the most abominable practices, to the service of the living God, the practice of holiness, and the hope of heaven. They have much yet to learn of the misery of those yet living (if such a state of existence deserves the name of *life*) in the region and shadow of death, unenlightened, unreclaimed, unpardoned through the blood of the cross ; of the deathlike insensibility of some, and of the heart-piercing cries of others, just beginning to awake to the perception of their misery, imploring help from the followers of Christ, a "teacher," a "teacheress," a "writing" of any description "about Jesus Christ," that may be the means of saving them



from "an eternal hell," and leading them to the knowledge and love of an "eternal God."

Now it is very true, there is, or there ought to be, a remedy for this kind of ignorance. It is to be found in the labors of every faithful pastor, in the diligent reading of the Bible, accompanied by the earnest prayer, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" and in the regular perusal of those periodicals, which bear weekly or monthly tidings of the progress of the missionary cause, at home and in foreign fields. Shall we add, in connection with these means, one never to be forgotten, —

—THE MONTHLY MISSIONARY CONCERT OF PRAYER?

But this is not all. Where all these means are used, a sad deficiency will be felt, from the want of some complete and connected history of missions. The monthly or weekly intelligence is perused with far less interest, where there is no such preliminary information concerning the various stations, their location, their wants, their supplies, the names of places and persons constantly occurring in connections which do not allow of any accompanying explanation. Or if the letters and journals of the missionaries, the proceedings of the missionary societies, &c., &c., be read with eager and affecting interest,—as no doubt they often are, where such full preliminary information is wanting,—still it is impossible, that equally distinct and permanent impressions can, in such a case, be made upon the mind. The picture is less perfectly surveyed, many of its features are passed over slightly, or in reality unperceived altogether, and instead of leaving behind it the feeling of having enjoyed a new opportunity of learning more of the character of a well-known and endeared friend, there remains but the confused recollection of having seen a multitude of faces, unknown or unrecognised in a passing crowd; or, perhaps, rather of having been introduced, in a company, to some interesting stranger, with whom you would fain form a more intimate acquaintance, but whose name you did not distinctly hear, or have, through inadvertence, forgotten. Hence, many a prayer, that might have been poured out for a mission, or for particular missionaries, in circumstances of special interest, encouragement or danger, has been lost to the cause, as well as many a device of kindness, and offering of sympathy and aid. Besides this, it rarely happens, even with those who are in the habit of taking and reading religious periodicals with deep interest, even among the ardent friends of missions, that their knowledge

or interest extends over the whole breadth of the missionary field. Not only are they unable to obtain such extensive information from the reading of one or two periodicals alone, but what they do derive from them is seldom a complete account of the progress of any one mission; at most, it is apt to be exclusively confined to the missions conducted by one denomination, of which the individual is by preference a member; while the labors, and sufferings, and successes of missionaries of other denominations are unthought of, and perhaps never even prayed for, because unread and unknown. Hence, necessarily, a narrow and exclusive spirit is engendered, and the soul is shut out from the innumerable benefits attendant upon an enlarged view of the missionary field, and of the generous sacrifices of others beyond the pale of our own communion, who have hazarded their lives in the same glorious service, from similar motives, even "for the name of the Lord Jesus." Would to God, that the deficiencies of which we speak were confined to private Christians in humble circumstances, and that they were not found also among the more wealthy, cultivated and distinguished, and even among the pastors of our churches!

Entertaining the views now expressed of the source of that indifference, which is apparent in many, to the missionary cause, and of the evils arising from defective information on the subject, we welcomed with deep and unaffected joy the appearance of Mr. Choules's "*Origin and History of Missions.*" We devoutly thank God for a work which so fully and happily supplies that very information which is needed by all who would intelligently love and wisely promote the great and arduous enterprise of the world's conversion,—who would know both what has been done, and what remains to be done, and what light the wide and diversified experience of the past throws upon the means to be employed for the future. We feel under deep obligation, together with the whole Christian community, to the gentlemen whose joint labors have given so valuable a desideratum at the present moment, so complete a "*MISSIONARY REPOSITORY,*" up to the date of its publication. Other works of a similar character, it is true, existed before; but on a very different scale, and the most of them quite in the rear of the present advanced state of the cause. The works of Brown, and Lord, and Winslow, and a few others, were the only ones accessible to the American public; and these were

but mere compends, precious as they were in the absence of more plenary information. The work of Mr. Choules is of a far more radical and thorough character, and derived, for the most part, from original and authentic documents. It constitutes, in every respect, the most authentic as well as the most complete work that has ever appeared. It is published, too, in a style, to which nothing that had previously appeared could make any pretensions. The size of the page and of the type, the quality of the paper, and the number and elegance of the engravings, equal, if not surpass, the most splendid productions of the American press. Indeed, the entire appearance of these large and beautiful volumes, containing together more than twelve hundred quarto pages of close letter press, in double columns, and handsomely bound, is well fitted to give to the most thoughtless eye an impression, which corresponds well with the dignity and glory of the enterprise to which its pages are devoted.

Owing to these very circumstances, however, the original cost placed it, of necessity, out of the reach of the poorer class of the friends of missions; and it is with a mixture of equal surprise and pleasure, that we learn of the disposal of *three* editions, in the same number of years, at the original price of fourteen dollars per copy. A recent change in the proprietorship of the copyright has enabled the publishers of the present, which is the *fourth* edition, notwithstanding all the enlargements and improvements that have been made, to offer it to the public at one half of the original sum, that is, at seven dollars per copy. We are sure, the friends of missions will rejoice in this fact, and that they will not be slow to avail themselves of the benefits of the new arrangement. We trust it will not be long before the "Origin and History of Missions" will be found lying by the side of the Family Bible, in the parlor of every intelligent Christian, and that both parents and children will be found richly imbued with that missionary spirit which was formed or nourished by the study of its maps, its pictures, and its pages.

We should greatly regret, if any thing, in the present embarrassed state of the country, as to its pecuniary affairs, should prevent the rapid sale of a work, whose wide circulation is evidently destined to give both an intellectual and moral enlargement to the minds of those who love the Redeemer, and long for the coming of his kingdom in the world. But we

should regret still more deeply, if any thing of this sort should be suffered to affect, to a large extent, the amount of our annual contributions for the promotion of this magnificent and holy cause. It is too true, that, as a nation, the rebuke of God is on us at this moment, in the derangement of our currency, and the unexampled pecuniary pressure, that has crushed thousands into bankruptcy and ruin. On the causes of this state of things, it were out of place here to enlarge, even were we competent; and the publication of Dr. Wayland's recent discourses upon this subject has happily rendered it unnecessary.\* But the question, how is this state of things to affect the operations of our foreign missions, is one of great moment; and it has been forced upon our attention by facts just developed in relation to the American Board of Commissioners. From an official statement of the present financial condition and prospects of that noble institution, we beg leave to make an extract or two, which struck us as presenting, in a most forcible light, the relations existing between missionary boards and the community on whom they depend to sustain and carry forward their operations, in a season of commercial embarrassment like the present:

"The financial concerns of the Board, for five years preceding the last, were in a highly prosperous condition; and under the influence of encouragements received from every quarter, increased vigor was given to the missions, and the sphere of its labors was enlarged. But owing to an unavoidable increase of expenditures, together with the pecuniary pressure, which began to be felt in the mercantile community fifteen months ago, the disbursements of the year ending July 31, 1836, were greater, by about \$39,000, than the receipts."

Then, after mentioning the methods adopted by the Board to awaken the attention of the Christian public to the case, the statement proceeds:

"The receipts of the Board indicate the increasing difficulty with which funds are obtained. In the *Missionary Herald* for January, \$30,107 were acknowledged; in that for February, \$19,436; in that for March, \$24,124; in that for April, \$17,578; in that for May, \$19,234; and in that for June, \$16,003. Many friends of the Board, who had intended to make liberal donations to its treasury, are, by the providential reverses experienced in their business, deprived of the ability to fulfil their generous intentions. The donations of others must be far less than they purposed. This is especially the

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\* See two discourses on "The Moral Law of Accumulation," by Francis Wayland.



case in our large towns and cities, where the pecuniary pressure is most severe; and unless the Board may rely on its friends in the interior, principally on the agricultural classes, for more general and enlarged contributions, the receipts, for months to come, must be expected to fall far below the estimate given above of the necessary expenditure (that is, from \$23,000 to \$25,000 a month).

"In these circumstances, an inquiry of great moment arises, What course shall the Board pursue? Shall they send forth those missionaries and assistants that are ready to go? Shall the new fields, which Providence is opening, be occupied? Shall the missions already established be reinforced, and immediate advantage be taken of all the facilities which have been created for the more rapid diffusion of knowledge and Christianity? Or, must there then be a retrenchment in the expenditure of the Board? Are the friends of missions willing to look at the consequences of such a measure, and permit them to be realized? Think of the effect on the presses,—on the schools and pupils,—on the seminaries and the native assistants training in them,—on the native teachers and catechists,—on the courage and hopes of the missionaries,—and on the aspect of the missionary work. Curtailment, if carried to any considerable extent, must necessarily be a process of retrograding,—an undoing of work already done, and which, if Christianity is ever to triumph, must be performed again. It must involve loss of time, loss of labor, loss of property, and a loss of the feeling of stability and progress. Is the Christian community strong enough, have they men and funds enough, and have they time enough, for performing their work at such disadvantage?

"But, supposing that immediate and great retrenchment were decided upon, are the community aware how long it would require to effect it? If the missions were located at our doors, or where the mail might carry communications to them in a few days, they might soon be reached by instructions from the committee, and their operations be modified according to the exigences of the times. But when it is remembered, that most of them are at distances from 6000 to 15,000 miles from the committee, and in parts of the world only occasionally visited by ships, and where communications are peculiarly liable to miscarriage or delay, the difficulty of making changes in them, accommodated to unexpected emergencies in this country, is readily seen. Expenditures, therefore, must go on at the missions, and drafts on the treasurer must continue to arrive in the common course, for twelve or eighteen months after the committee shall have found retrenchment to be necessary, and shall have used all practicable measures to effect it."

A case like this, and the above full and frank exposition of it, appears to us worthy of more consideration than has heretofore been given to it by the Christian community. It is evidently one which is liable to befall other missionary institutions; indeed, all, whose operations are as extensive and progressive in their character as the claims of the heathen and the calls of Providence imperatively demand. It may be, that hitherto

the Board of the Baptist Convention have not felt such an embarrassment; and perhaps reasons for this may be assigned, drawn from the condition of the contributors, but few of whom are found among the wealthy commercial classes; but while their exemption, thus far, from whatever cause it may arise, is a matter for grateful and devout acknowledgment, yet the obvious liability of such an occurrence, at any future moment, certainly requires, that the extending operations of the Board, so full of hope and promise as they are, should be sustained by the prompt, the pious and growing liberality of the churches, most of whom delight to own themselves the devoted friends of missions. The danger should be steadily kept in sight, and by proper efforts avoided; for *shall we dwell in our ceiled houses, to use the language of the prophet, and the house of the Lord lie waste?* Amidst all the mutations of this world and of its kingdoms, let us remember, that we, through grace, belong to *a kingdom that cannot be moved*; and let the fluctuations of trade, the ebbs and flows of worldly prosperity, still find us *steadfast and immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord*. It is a consolation, to reflect, that though disappointments attend us in every path and prospect of worldly interest, it is not so in promoting the interests of the kingdom of Christ. Whatever we do for him is never lost, is never done in vain. Not a cent that is devoted to the extension of his word, or the assistance of his servants, is given unmarked by his gracious eye. "Whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only, in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward." Matt. 10: 42.

May we not remark, that the times call especially upon Christians of the poorer classes to come forward universally to the work of the Lord? Now that *the abundance of the rich* is cut off from his treasury, now is the time that the offerings of the poor should be multiplied, that the *widow's two mites* possess not only the preciousness of principle, but the peculiar value of appropriateness, and the beauty of affectionate and universal combination. When the great reservoirs are dried up, we resort with eagerness to the little springs, and bless God for their unfailing and refreshing flow. Though each member of our churches seem but a drop in the ocean, let him remember, that the ocean itself is made up of drops. Let self-denying charity be the order of the day, that the work of God

may go on, with unembarrassed means, and with increasing power and glory, among the perishing heathen. Let *our prayers and our alms*, at a time like this, go up with increasing ardor, *as a memorial before God*.

To promote this state of feeling and action among Christians, we call upon them, one and all, to *read* more on the subject of missions. We beseech them to form and to keep up an affectionate familiarity with the journals and letters of missionaries in every portion of the globe. Their object, their work, is one. A sublime unity reigns over all this great enterprise, though carried on at widely different points, by different denominations of Protestant Christians,—by the Moravians, by the English Baptists, by the London and the Church Missionary Societies, by the Wesleyan Missionary Society, by the Scottish Missionary Society, by the American Board of Commissioners, by the American Baptist Board, by the American Methodist Episcopal Society, by the Missionary Society of the Protestant Episcopal Church of the United States, and other societies of inferior importance; an ample account of all which will be found in the volumes at the head of this article. We have not space to enter into a particular analysis of the contents of this great record of missionary enterprise, nor to speak as critics of the style in which it is executed by the authors; and we rejoice, that this is the less necessary, because the work has been, in former editions, long enough before the public, to have secured for itself the unanimous suffrages of the most competent judges of all denominations, as to the primary qualities of completeness, authenticity and impartiality. We would observe, that to Mr. Choules the public are indebted for by far the greatest and most difficult part of this joint production; Mr. Smith's lamented death having prevented him from contributing any thing more than the history of the *English* missions down to the year 1822. The continuation of *these* missions, and the history of all the rest, is from the pen of Mr. Choules, who also has furnished the valuable matter embodied in the Introduction and the Conclusion.

We cannot more appropriately finish this article, than by an extract from his Preface, which, while it serves as a specimen of the spirit in which the work is written, suggests also the spirit in which it should be read:

“O, that the sacramental host of God's elect would make themselves acquainted and familiar with the revealed presages of Zion's

glory! O, that they would ponder the merciful purposes of God respecting the north and south, the east and west! O, that they would remember, that a Saviour's blood hath sealed the conquest of the multitude which man cannot number! Then they would feel, that, truly as there is a God in heaven, the kingdoms of this world are to become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ; and with an energy and rapture superior to that which once impelled all Europe against the followers of the false prophet, they would cry out, respecting the conversion of the world, 'It is the will of God! it is the will of God!'"—p. 8.

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### ARTICLE XIII.

#### THOUGHTS SUGGESTED BY THE TIMES.

ARCHBISHOP LEIGHTON, when apologizing for the character of his sermons, very piously remarked, that while so many of his brethren preached about the times, he might surely be allowed to preach on eternity. We can have no doubt, that eternity, with its momentous realities, is a theme which should often occupy the thoughts and pervade the discourses of our most eloquent preachers. It ought to command the profound attention of all human beings; for, compared with its sublime scenes, the fate of cities and the rise and fall of nations are but as the dust of the balance. And yet, by the circumstances of our earthly condition, we are so universally and deeply affected by the times, that we are of opinion, it best accords with an enlightened piety, to embrace in our contemplations, not only the things which are unseen and eternal, but those which are seen and temporal.

The times are God's book of providence, in which he teaches us, most impressively, the consequences of regarding or disregarding the laws of our personal and social existence. Next, therefore, to the pages of inspiration, this book of providence should be frequently and carefully examined; and we think, that the ministers of religion should consider it a part of their appropriate duty to interpret and enforce its salutary truths.

We all feel, that the present are extremely disastrous and afflictive times. An uncommonly numerous portion of our most active and enterprising citizens, who had amassed fortunes,



have suddenly become poor. Even the government, which lately boasted of a treasury with overflowing millions, is virtually bankrupt. Public confidence is destroyed. Men dare not trust each other. Their hearts fail them for fear. The whole community has been checked in its rapid and apparently prosperous career. The merchant, the manufacturer, the mechanic, and the day laborer, have felt the shock, and may feel it still more.

We will not enter into a discussion of the causes of our present wide-spread embarrassments and gloomy prospects. They are, we believe, many and complicated. But they may all, perhaps, be traced to an over-estimate of this world,—its riches, honors and pleasures,—producing an inordinate desire of gain. Impatient of labor, and not satisfied with the slow but safe process of acquiring wealth, multitudes have left their proper avocations, and have rushed headlong into extensive and hazardous speculations. The multiplication of banks, unchecked by a suitable regulating power, has given facility for credits. And feeling rich, although only in the possession of borrowed money, many have increased their domestic expenditures, and launched forth in schemes of aggrandizement, which more limited means, or cool reflection, would have taught them were Utopian. The result has been, bitter disappointment; and, in too many instances, we fear there has been the incalculable loss of those lovely attributes of character, truth, honesty, and fair dealing, without which there can be no durable prosperity.

We have lamented the prevalence of this worldly spirit,—this grasping mania to become suddenly rich. We have seen, with unutterable pain, its blighting influence in our churches; destroying the buds and blossoms of piety, and diverting the minds of men from all serious concern for their eternal interests. We have seen, that the exorbitant value set upon property was fictitious, and that the gilded bubbles set afloat by speculators, to allure the unwary, must burst. We predicted, that a fearful reaction would come. It has come. And now the question arises, what is to be done? Shall we devote the future to unavailing regrets, and yield to the buffeting waves and the furious storm? By no means. Let us rather learn wisdom, by a careful review of the past. Let us calmly and manfully breast the storm, hoping, that in a discreet and diligent return to duty, we shall find a sure haven of rest. Above all,

let us be concerned, from a conviction of the instability of earthly possessions, to moderate our desires as to their acquisition.

While sympathizing with our disappointed friends,—many of whom are men of honor, integrity, and true-hearted benevolence,—and participating in the general gloom of the community,—not knowing what calamities might yet befall us,—our own mind became delightfully tranquil, on recollecting the declaration of the Saviour, “A man’s life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.” Perhaps the reflections to which it gave rise may impart tranquillity to bosoms now distracted with worldly cares. It is this hope which induces us to give them a permanent record.

A greediness of gain is not a vice which commenced with the present generation. There was one who applied to Christ, saying, “Master, speak to my brother, that he divide the inheritance with me.” He had no claim whatever to such a division. But he envied even his own brother the possession which had legally descended to him. He was willing to deprive him of half of his estate, not by giving him an equivalent, but by unfair influence. But *the Just One* could not lend himself to such a transaction. At once he replied, “Who made me a judge or divider over you?” He saw the spirit of covetousness developed, and he rebuked it. “Take heed,” said he, “and beware of covetousness; for a man’s life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.” Here is a substantial reason for restraining our desires in respect to worldly possessions, and a motive for suppressing anxiety under the losses we may sustain.

Our physical life does not depend on the abundance of the things which we possess. We cannot all possess abundance. It would, therefore, be an impeachment of the wisdom and goodness of our heavenly Father, to suppose that life was dependent on abundance. But it is not so. He has made ample provision for our animal wants. If deprived of this provision, it must be owing, either to our own folly and wickedness, or to the injustice and cruelty of others. He has so constructed our frames, that, wondrous as they are, their growth, and sustenance, and healthful activity, are best promoted by the cheap and simple fare which is within the reach of all.

The costly viands and the rich dainties which wealth pro-

cures are by no means necessary for the sustentation of life. They are, in fact, injurious. They pamper the appetite,—inflict organic disease,—derange the operations of the animal economy,—impair the vital energies,—produce lassitude, depression of spirits, and premature decay and death.

The pure breezes of heaven,—the stream gushing from the crystal well,—butter and milk of kine,—bread made of the fruits of the earth,—meat from the flocks and herds on a thousand hills,—and fish from the sea,—are the food which the Creator has provided for his creatures in profuse abundance. These, temperately used, will protract life to its assigned period. No language, uninspired, is more true, or more deserving of recollection, than that of the poet, who says,

“Man wants but little here below,  
Nor wants that little long.”

Now, if this be the case, why should we cherish an inordinate desire for abundance? Or if, by recent events, we have been deprived of abundance, why should we repine and vex ourselves, and thus give a keener edge and a more ponderous weight to our disappointments? Neither life nor health, neither vigor of body nor activity of mind, depends on the abundance of the things which we possess. “Having, therefore, food and raiment, let us be therewith content.”

Our *spiritual life* does not consist in the abundance of the things which we possess.

We most readily grant, that the comforts, and even the elegances of life, when they come to us in the ordinary and honorable pursuits of business, are not to be despised. But they are not necessary—they are not essential to our happiness. If Solomon’s opinion,—who had riches in abundance, and had surrounded himself with scenes of splendor,—be entitled to regard, we may feel satisfied, that vanity is inscribed upon them all. But we need not go back to the days of Solomon, for proof of a fact so obvious. We may appeal to living witnesses. We may ask those who have risen to the possession of immense wealth, and have descended again into the vale of poverty, whether, in the time of their greatest prosperity, their cares were diminished, or their sleep more quiet, or their minds more at ease, than in their former condition. We might ask them, whether the calm enjoyments of unambitious and noiseless poverty, or the splendid rivalries of gay parties,—seeking to

outvie each other in brilliancy, in taste, and expense,—brought the greatest amount of solace and happiness to the inner man. We need not wait for an answer. The response has been made. The acknowledgment has come from a thousand disappointed hearts, that they became estranged from happiness just in proportion as they sought it in artificial distinctions, and in the glare of external objects.

The truth is,—and we devoutly thank God for it,—that, in man, whatever may be his outward condition, the mind is the only seat of his happiness. If the mind be properly schooled and exercised, happiness will be in the ascendant, whether the body be covered with coarse or fine raiment,—whether its abode be in the elegant mansion or the humble cottage,—whether it is borne along in the soft-cushioned curricule, or moved by its own activity. The great Creator has not permitted the happiness of his creatures to depend on the ever-varying incidents of life. The soul is not more the standard of the man, than it is the measure of his happiness. In communion with the Father of spirits,—in the hope of a blessed immortality through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus,—in conscious rectitude of purpose and action,—in tempers and affections formed by the doctrines of the Saviour,—and in intercourse with kindred minds,—it experiences

“What nothing earthly gives, or can destroy,  
The soul's calm sunshine and the heartfelt joy.”

Who could have been more serene than Daniel in the lion's den? or more happy than Paul and Silas in the inner prison? or more transported with joy than Stephen, when his enemies were stoning him to death? Why this serenity,—this happiness,—this exultation? Their souls held communion with the skies,—their hope was in God, and in the efficacy of the Mediator's blood. Considering themselves as strangers and pilgrims on earth, they abstained from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul. They looked for a city which is above, whose builder and maker is God. They were strong and joyous, in the consciousness of having been made meet for the inheritance of the saints in light. Their spiritual life was not weakened, much less destroyed, by the stinted amount of their earthly possessions.

In view of the facts and reasons which have been stated, let us take heed, and beware of covetousness. We are constantly



in danger of being betrayed into this error. We set far too high a value on riches. We forget, that they are deceitful and vain, and think chiefly of the distinctions they confer, and their power in ministering to our appetites. The common folly of manifesting respect for men of wealth, without once considering how they acquired it, or how they use it, or what is their personal character, is a strong temptation to many to covet riches. There needs a great revolution in public opinion and practice on this subject. We shall never become truly great and virtuous, as a nation, until our homage, and applause, and friendships, are regulated by a higher standard. Intellectual and moral attainments, the diffusion of private happiness, or the promotion of public good, should be considered indispensable requisites for public favor and for private confidence and regard. Did these sentiments prevail, the temptation to covetousness would be greatly weakened, and a nobler ambition than the pursuit of wealth would be awakened in many a bosom.

Christians should especially beware of covetousness, on account of its irreligious influence. It is the canker of the soul. We believe it has given a type to the diseased condition of our churches. Its effects have been disastrous to the growth of Christian piety, and to the full and beautiful manifestation of Christian character. When the cares of business so entirely engross the time and thoughts as to leave no leisure for secret devotion, for family prayer, for the perusal and study of the Scriptures, and for public worship, personal piety and Christian morals will inevitably decline. These are the only means which can sustain and perpetuate their existence. Periodical efforts may produce periodical fervor. Only habitual efforts can produce habitual religion. He who would be an every day Christian, must every day use the means which God has appointed to invigorate the Christian graces.

We would, therefore, entreat Christians to pursue their business on Christian principles, having a constant reference to the improvement of their own characters, to their religious enjoyments, and to their personal usefulness. We would persuade them not to engage in secular concerns, or involve themselves in cares which will allow them no suitable time for secret devotion, and for the cultivation of their minds, especially in divine knowledge. There may, indeed, be seasons, when their avocations may require more of their time and anxieties

than is desirable. Then it may be their duty to forego the pleasure and profit of their accustomed retirement, for active worldly engagements. But when active engagements, stealing upon their allotted moments for reading and devotion, are the rule, and not the exception,—when they are the habit, instead of being the incident,—Christians cannot fail of suffering thereby.

We trust, therefore, we shall be pardoned, if we earnestly recommend a systematic distribution of their time, with a view to their growing in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Let them first consider their relative situation, and the claims which business and household affairs have upon them, and then fix on certain stated seasons for devotion, reading and meditation. No trivial causes should ever be allowed to encroach on the hours which are thus sacredly set apart for communion with God, and for their intellectual and religious improvement.

We would urge Christians to begin each day by endeavoring to ascertain its probable events, its duties, its snares, its provocations, its joys. Let these furnish them with matter for petition, supplication and thanksgiving. Thus prepared, they will go forth into the world, girded for duty and fortified against temptation, and will return comparatively uninjured by its scenes. Let them close each evening, by reviewing the transactions in which they have been engaged, and the impressions which, for good or evil, have been made upon their minds. This will supply them with topics for humble confession, self-renouncement, and joyful adoration and praise. The effect of such a course would be an habitual and elevated piety, and a character for moral excellence above all suspicion or reproach. Their light would not be like the glare of the comet, attracting for a few nights the gaze of the world, and then passing off into the obscurity of space; it would be like that of the sun, shining more and more unto the perfect day.

We frankly acknowledge, that such an appropriation of time to the exercises of piety, the improvement of the understanding, and the cultivation of the social affections, is not the way to become suddenly rich. We happen to be among those who do not consider riches to be the chief good. We believe, that peace of conscience, a mind stored with useful knowledge and disciplined to habits of reflection, and the calm pleasures of home, are infinitely preferable to riches. And we hold them

to be least valuable, nay, in most instances, positively injurious, when they are acquired suddenly. There are but very few who are capable of bearing with propriety, dignity and self-control, a sudden rise of fortune. Their tastes, habits and views, are not prepared for their new condition. Hence they become vain, extravagant, sensual; living in a whirl of folly, until their property is squandered, and they sink into their original obscurity. So far as wealth is useful or desirable, its gradual accumulation, by patient, honorable and industrious means, is most rational and satisfactory. It may, thus acquired, minister to the refined pleasures of its possessors.

But let it not be forgotten, that although, by an unwearied and exclusive attention to gain, our property should continually increase, yet in a very short period we must leave it all. "We brought nothing into the world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out." When a few years are come, the fruit of all our labor and anxiety will be at an end. And how will the review of a life exclusively devoted to gain appear to us in a dying hour? To feel compelled to leave the possessions we have idolized, and to fear that we have laid up no treasure in heaven, will be insupportable. Riches will then be of no avail. They may introduce us to what is misnamed good society here; but they will be no passport to the society of the just made perfect. Heaven's gates will not be opened to us, because, in this world, we dwelt in ceiled houses, and were arrayed in gay attire. *Character, not condition*, will be the test by which the Searcher of hearts will decide on our eternal state. *The use, not the possession*, of riches will elevate or sink us before the Judge of the universe.

We sincerely trust, that those who have lost their property, and feel that a dark cloud overshadows their future prospects, will not yield themselves a prey to grief. Although no affliction, for the present, is joyous, but rather grievous, yet afterwards it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness to them that are exercised thereby. It may be, that your heavenly Father saw, that a change in your condition was needful. Perhaps you had extended your business, and assumed responsibilities beyond your capacity and means. Or you had entered into such numerous and complicated engagements, as to leave you no time for calm reflection, for secret prayer, for the study of the Bible, and for improving Christian conversation. Perhaps you had begun to feel a distaste for the exercises of Chris-

tian piety. Your heavenly Father saw this, and he afflicted you; not for his pleasure, but for your profit, that you might be partakers of his holiness. If you have had fathers after the flesh who corrected you, and yet you gave them reverence, how much more ought you to be in subjection to the Father of spirits, and live! Adversity may indeed occur, not as a correction for sin, but to give the Christian an opportunity of exhibiting the superior excellence of his principles, and his superior consolations. But, under whatever circumstances adversity comes, it will be profitable to consider its causes, and the uses to which it may be made subservient.

Finally, let it be remembered, that happiness does not consist in the abundance of the things which are possessed. It is character, not property, which secures happiness. "Better is a little with righteousness, than great revenues without right." The Almighty says to us now, as he did to his people in a former age, "Trust in the Lord, and do good; so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed." Let us, then, guard against all anxious and distressing thought as "to our life, what we shall eat, or for the body, what we shall put on. For all these things do the nations of the world seek after; and our heavenly Father knoweth that we have need of these things."

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#### ARTICLE XIV.

##### LITERARY NOTICES.

1. *The Moral Law of Accumulation; the Substance of two Discourses, delivered in the First Baptist Meeting-house, Providence, May 14, 1837.* By FRANCIS WAYLAND. Providence. 8vo. pp. 35. 1837.

THESE discourses were prepared with a special reference to the pecuniary embarrassments which have covered our country with a general gloom. Most of the ministers of the gospel have, we believe, endeavored to direct the minds of their hearers to a suitable consideration of the causes and remedies of this national affliction. Several sermons have been published. These discourses of Dr. Wayland appear to us to treat the subject in a manner worthy of his character as a Christian minister, and a teacher of political economy.

He begins by showing, that the calamity ought to be regarded as a visitation from God. After a graphic description of its effects on the wealth and business of the country, the author proceeds, "first, to illustrate the moral causes which have led to these disasters; and



secondly, to suggest some of the lessons which may be learned from the history of the present crisis." He states, as the leading cause, the prevalence of wrong principles in respect to the accumulation of property, and to the manner of using it. The pursuit of wealth is not, in itself, wrong; but it must be regulated by right principles. The true law of accumulation is thus stated:

"God intends, that man should grow rich by adding something to the means of human happiness; and just in proportion to the amount which we ourselves have thus added, is the amount of our lawful gain. He who produces corn, or wool, or cotton, or iron, or fabricates or prepares them for the purposes of human convenience; or he who transports them from places where they are less wanted to places where they are more wanted; or he who exchanges them for the parties by whom they are produced; or he who devotes his time and his abilities of any sort to the accomplishment of a valuable result,—adds something to the means of happiness of the whole; and for his labor, and skill, and capital, in performing this service, he is entitled to a fair remuneration. This remuneration is his means of accumulation. The greater his skill, and the more diligent his industry, the greater will be the amount of benefit which he will confer upon the community, and the larger is the recompense to which he is entitled. The stricter his frugality, and the more rigid his self-government, the less will be his expenditure, and the larger his annual nett revenue. To all the results of his labor, and skill, and frugality, he is fully and fairly entitled; and the more he thus benefits himself, the better is it for him, and the better is it for his neighbor."—p. 10.

Dr. W. places, in contrast with this right and safe mode of accumulating wealth, the ruinous tendencies of a different method:

"Suppose every man to become dissatisfied with the rate of accumulation to which I now allude; and that, forsaking his reliance upon the actual productiveness of his own skill and industry, he should betake himself to ascertaining in what manner he might, without fraud, anticipate the gains of his neighbor. If my neighbor hold cotton, or wheat, or iron, or land, which I conceive will rise in value, suppose me to purchase, not that I may use it, or improve it, or increase its value by my own labor, but merely that I may secure to myself, instead of allowing to him, the benefit of the change. Let this desire become universal, and then let the circulating medium be extended sufficiently to afford the necessary facilities for indulging it, and there must ensue an extraordinary rise of prices, not proceeding from any diminution of products, or any increase of consumers, or the discovery of any new value in the products themselves, but solely from the passionate anticipations of men concerning the future, and their intense desire to overreach each other. This rise of prices will, of course, yield enormous profits. Enormous profits lead to enormous expenditure. The demand for every object, either of luxury or convenience, is immense. All kinds of business are prosperous beyond any former example. It seems as though men had found out some new mode of accumulation, and God had never

said to the swelling waves of human desire, thus far shalt thou go, and no farther.

"All this is the appearance. But if we strip off the appearance, and examine the reality, it will be found, that this mode of acquisition is deceptive in its results, and corrupting in its tendencies."—pp. 11, 12.

The author speaks of the moral effects of this inordinate desire of wealth. It violates the command, "Thou shalt not covet." It leads men to oppress the poor, by combining to raise the price of necessary articles of subsistence. It disposes men to forget God, and neglect their souls.

In the manner of using wealth, there has been a great error. It has, too generally, been employed, not for God and for human happiness, but for self-indulgence; and justly has God swept it away.

In the second discourse, Dr. Wayland offers some suggestions, which are suitable to the present crisis. As a means of lessening the evils which we suffer, we ought to consider the nature of the calamity. It is not the result of famine or pestilence. All the elements of our national prosperity remain unchanged. But the nation has contracted heavy debts, which must be paid, at every sacrifice. Industry and frugality must be practised by all. There must be mutual forbearance and confidence. Individuals must aid each other; and the whole community must unite, and sustain the currency of the country. "Instead of hoarding up specie in our houses, we should carry it to the bank, and thus contribute each one his share to enable the bank to recommence its specie payments, and to give to its currency afloat the greatest possible soundness." We should forbear to censure the government. "In such a time as this, respect for law is our strongest human safeguard."

The author closes by suggesting a few practical lessons. "1. The occurrences passing before our eyes illustrate, in a most convincing manner, the wisdom of the scriptural law of accumulation." Men have disregarded this law, have made haste to be rich, and have plunged into bankruptcy. "2. The events now transpiring teach us, that we have erred, very generally, in the estimate which we have placed upon the value of wealth." "3. The present crisis seems to render humiliation before God the appropriate moral temper of the whole community."

2. *Causes of Religious Declension, particularly those which have occasioned the present low state of Religion among different Denominations of Christians.* By JEREMIAH CHAPLIN, D. D., Pastor of the Baptist Church in Willington, Ct. Hartford. Canfield & Robins. pp. 108. 1837.

We are glad to see this little treatise from the pen of Dr. Chaplin. It treats of a highly important subject, which no man is better qualified to discuss. His long experience, his deep knowledge of the Scriptures, and his sound judgment, eminently fit him to be the teacher of our churches; and we hope, that this work is but the first fruits of the harvest which we are yet to gather from his matured wisdom and piety.

The following list of the contents will show the nature of the topics which are introduced:

"Introduction—The low state of religion among Christians considered, and the importance of ascertaining the causes of the evil. Primary cause, *the depravity of the human heart*. Other causes stated and illustrated in the following chapters:—Chap. I. Neglect of the bread of life. II. Improper connections with the ungodly. III. Spiritual indolence. IV. Want of a suitable control over our thoughts. V. Neglect of prayer; particularly of *secret* prayer. VI. Temporal prosperity. VII. Desecration of the Sabbath. VIII. Too great precipitancy in the admission of candidates to church fellowship. IX. Violent religious excitements. X. Extensive prevalence of the opinion, that the influence of religious principle cannot be expected, in most cases, to be steady and constant. XI. Perversion of the doctrine of grace. XII. The manner in which Christian ministers too often spend their time when out of the pulpit. XIII. Prevalence of the opinion, that on the pastor of a church is devolved nearly the whole work of promoting the interests of religion in the place where he resides. XIV. Manner in which Christians frequently treat the Holy Spirit. XV. Neglect of the daily exercise of repentance towards God, and of faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ. Closing Address."

All these topics are judiciously illustrated. The style is clear and simple, yet nervous and dignified. We think, that pastors will do well to recommend this book to their churches.

3. *Lives of Virginia Baptist Ministers.* By JAMES B. TAYLOR, Pastor of the Second Baptist Church, Richmond. Richmond. 12mo. pp. 444. 1837.

This interesting volume contains biographical sketches of eighty Baptist ministers, who lived and labored in Virginia. It is creditable to the industry and skill of the author. Besides the charm which belongs to biography, a large portion of the history of the Virginia Baptists may be learned from these notices of men, who founded churches, and endured persecutions, and toiled, amid much evil report and suffering, to advance the Saviour's kingdom in Virginia. In that State, the book must possess a high interest; and it may be read with profit by all who love Zion. All may be benefited by these details of ministerial fidelity and Christian character. Many of these names belong not to Virginia alone. Robert B. Semple, Noah Davis, Abner W. Clopton, and Lott Cary, made themselves extensively known by their good works. Lott Cary is the subject of one of the longest sketches. It is doing no injustice to the other excellent men who are mentioned in this volume, to say, that Lott Cary, notwithstanding his African blood, had few—perhaps no—superiors among them, in talents, in piety, and in native grandeur of soul. From the condition of an ignorant slave, he gradually rose, till he became so skilful an assistant in a tobacco warehouse, that his employers offered him a salary of \$1000 per annum; he learned to read and write, and obtained considerable useful knowledge; he

redeemed himself and two children from slavery, by paying \$850; and he became a zealous and eloquent preacher. He at length resolved to leave all his opportunities of gaining wealth at home, and go to Africa, for the purpose of aiding to spread civilization, freedom and happiness, over that dark continent. In Africa, he became one of the main pillars of the Liberia colony, of which he was chosen the vice agent. After a course of honorable services, of the utmost value to the colony, he was unhappily killed, by an accidental explosion of the magazine, in November, 1828. The sketch given by Mr. Taylor is very interesting, and does full justice to the character of Mr. Cary. His memory will live in the history of Africa. He was a kindred spirit with the venerable father of modern missions; and he has aided to make CAREY

“One of the few, the immortal names,  
Which were not born to die.”

We wish, that the Baptists in other States would imitate the example of their Virginia brethren, in their care to preserve their own history, and the memory of their distinguished men. No other State has any thing to be compared with Semple's History of the Virginia Baptist Churches, and with the book before us. Mr. Taylor is preparing another volume on the history of the Baptists in Virginia.\*

4. *Address delivered before the Literary Societies at the Wake Forest Institute, North Carolina, November 24, 1836.* By THOMAS MEREDITH. Newbern. 8vo. pp. 14. 1837.

This address contains many excellent suggestions, well expressed, respecting the discouragements which obstruct the course of a student, and the motives that ought to cheer and impel him onward. We hope, that the students at the flourishing seminary at Wake Forest will profit by the advice of Mr. Meredith.

5. *Memoir of Alvan Stone, of Goshen, Mass.* By DAVID WRIGHT, Pastor of the Central Church, Westfield, Mass. Boston. pp. 256. 1837.

This little book contains an account of the life and character of a young man, who was born in Goshen, Mass., August 15, 1807; became a member of the Baptist church in Cummington, May 25, 1828; entered Amherst College, September 24, 1829, with a view to obtain an education preparatory to the work of the ministry; left college, March 31, 1831, and went to Illinois, where he kept school, till he died, at Alton, of a pulmonary disease, February 13, 1833, in the twenty-sixth year of his age. Mr. Stone possessed unquestionable piety, and a good mind. His letters and other papers are evidences of respectable talents. If his health had permitted him to enter the ministry, he would, we doubt not, have been a faithful and useful laborer.

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\* Since the preceding notice was written, we have received a neat little book, of 108 pages, containing the biographical sketch of Lott Cary, alluded to above. It well deserves to be republished in a separate form. There is a short appendix, on the subject of colonization.



6. *A new Translation of the Hebrew Prophets, arranged in chronological order.* By GEORGE R. NOYES. Vol. II. Containing Nahum, Zephaniah, Habakkuk, Obadiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations. Boston. James Munroe & Co. 12mo. pp. 293.

Every attempt to elucidate the Holy Scriptures, either by an improved version, or by judicious notes, claims the approbation of all Christians. Mr. Noyes has acquired, by his previous works, the character of an able translator; and this elegant volume will tend to confirm the public opinion. Objections may doubtless be made to particular passages. We have put the book into the hands of a friend, who is well qualified to estimate its merits. If his leisure shall permit, he will favor us with an examination of the work.

7. *A Brief Narrative of the Danish Mission on the Coast of Coromandel.* By BARON STOW, Pastor of the Baptist Church in Baldwin Place, Boston. Boston. New-England Sabbath School Union. pp. 126. 1837.

This little book contains an interesting account of the missionary labors of Ziegenbalg, Swartz, and others, in the southern part of India. These labors were commenced more than a hundred years ago, and they were successful in leading many souls to the Saviour. Our Sabbath school libraries cannot have too many such books as this.

8. *The Sabbath School Truant; or Temptation not resisted.* Written for the New-England Sabbath School Union, and revised by the Committee of Publication. Boston. pp. 91. 1837.

This book contains a useful and interesting story, the main incidents of which are declared to be "not fictitious." We are glad to see the spirit with which the New-England Sabbath School Union are issuing new books. We hope, that they will be encouraged to proceed.

9. *Class Book of Natural Theology, or the Testimony of Nature to the Being, Perfections and Government of God.* By the Rev. HENRY FERGUS. Revised and enlarged, and adapted to Paxton's Illustrations, with Notes, selected and original, biographical Notices, and a Vocabulary of Scientific Terms. By the Rev. CHARLES HENRY ALDEN, A. M., Principal of the Philadelphia High School for Young Ladies. Second edition, revised. Boston. Gould, Kendall & Lincoln. 12mo. pp. 252. 1837.

This book is on the same general plan as Paley's admirable work on Natural Theology. It treats many of the same topics, but it introduces several new ones, and it is adapted to the present advanced state of scientific knowledge. The chapters on the Ocean, Water, the Atmosphere, &c., are excellent. It has a more devotional tone than Paley's work. It will not, however, supersede it. It is designed for a different class of readers. "A distinct object with the editor of the following work has been, to render it strictly appropriate, both to the public and private education of young ladies."

It is well printed, and is adorned by illustrations, which have been before appended to Paley's Theology, but which are pertinent and useful here. This book, thoroughly studied in early life, would help to fortify the mind against skepticism, and dispose it to adore and love the glorious Being, whose attributes are here so beautifully displayed.

10. *The Comparative Advantages of Written and Extemporaneous Sermons.* By JOSEPH A. WARNE, A. M. Boston. pp. 48. 1837.

This treatise was first read as an essay, before the Conference of Baptist Ministers in Massachusetts. It is well written, and it discusses, in a temperate and able manner, the arguments and objections which are connected with the subject. Mr. Warne endeavors to prove the superior advantages of extemporaneous sermons; i. e., of sermons carefully studied, but not written. Much may be said on both sides. We do not believe, that abstract principles can decide this question. There is so wide a diversity in the character and talents of ministers, in the circumstances of congregations, and in the nature of the themes to be discussed in the pulpit, that a style of preaching, which would be proper and useful for one minister, or congregation, or subject, would be unsuited to another. The free, direct style of extemporaneous address is, undoubtedly, the most natural, and, where other things are equal, the best; but it may not follow, that, in all circumstances, it is to be preferred. Walking is the only *natural* mode of locomotion for man; but it is not, therefore, in all cases, the best. We would urge all young ministers to acquire the power of preaching without writing; but we would also press on them the truth, long since taught by Cicero and Quintilian, that he who would speak well without writing must be in the habit of writing much.

EDITOR.

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## ARTICLE XV.

### MISCELLANEOUS INTELLIGENCE.

#### LITERARY.

Messrs. Gould, Kendall & Lincoln have in press a translation of Gesenius's Hebrew Grammar, by Rev. Professor Conant, of the Hamilton Literary and Theological Institution.

A "History of the Baptists in Western New-York," by Messrs. John Peck and John Lawton, is in press.

Professor Nordheimer, of the University of New-York, is preparing a Hebrew Grammar.

An edition of the complete Works of President Davies, with a new Memoir of his life, is in preparation.

The Rev. Dr. Holmes, of Cambridge, who lately deceased, is said to have left some valuable lectures on the ecclesiastical history of New-England.

Two volumes of the correspondence of Henry Martyn have been lately published in London.

Rev. Adiel Sherwood is collecting materials for a History of the Baptists in Georgia.

#### BIBLE CONVENTION.

We gave, in our last number, a hasty notice of the organization and proceedings of the Bible Convention, which was held at Philadelphia, April 26, 1837. We have since received the official account, and a sketch of the discussions. We will now present some additional particulars:

The whole number of delegates reported is three hundred and ninety, viz.:

Maine,.....	4	Virginia,.....	24
New-Hampshire,.....	5	North Carolina,.....	5
Vermont,.....	3	South Carolina,.....	1
Massachusetts,.....	35	Georgia,.....	1
Rhode-Island,.....	8	Alabama,.....	2
Connecticut,.....	20	Mississippi,.....	1
New-York,.....	112	Tennessee,.....	1
New-Jersey,.....	59	Kentucky,.....	1
Pennsylvania,.....	97	Ohio,.....	2
Delaware,.....	1	Michigan,.....	2
Maryland,.....	2	Indiana,.....	1
District of Columbia,.....	2	Illinois,.....	1

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The Convention thus purported to represent twenty-three States and one District. In a few cases, societies or churches in one State were represented by delegates who reside in another State. It will be seen, moreover, that while eight of the States had but one delegate each, New-York had one hundred and twelve representatives, Pennsylvania, ninety-seven, and New-Jersey, fifty-nine. This fact is of no importance, except as it proves, that the Convention did not equally represent the whole denomination; and that, however respectable for the talents and piety of its members, it was not empowered to legislate for the denomination. It was, in fact, a voluntary meeting for free consultation; and its decisions can, of course, bind no one, except those who voted for them, and those who may deliberately adopt them.

We copy from the minutes the Constitution of the American and Foreign Bible Society, as adopted by the Convention:

“ART. I. The name of this Society shall be, **THE AMERICAN AND FOREIGN BIBLE SOCIETY.**

ART. II. The object of this Society shall be, to aid in the translation, printing and circulation, of the sacred Scriptures.

ART. III. Each contributor of three dollars annually shall be a member.

ART. IV. Each contributor of thirty dollars at one time shall be a member for life.

ART. V. Each contributor of one hundred and fifty dollars shall be a life-director.

ART. VI. Every Baptist minister, who is a life-member, and all life-directors, shall have the privilege of participating in the deliberations of the Board.

ART. VII. All Bible Societies, agreeing to place their surplus funds in the treasury of the Society, shall be auxiliaries; and the officers of such Societies shall be *ex officio* directors of this.

ART. VIII. A Board of Managers shall be appointed, to conduct the business of the Society, consisting of thirty-six brethren in good standing in Baptist churches, sixteen of whom shall reside in the city of New-York, or its vicinity; the whole Board to be elected annually by the Society, and to hold their office until superseded by a new election. The Board shall have power to fill such vacancies as may occur in their number.

ART. IX. The President, Vice Presidents, Secretaries, and Treasurer, shall be *ex officio* members of the Board.

ART. X. The Managers shall meet monthly, or oftener, if necessary, at such time and place as they shall adjourn to, five of whom shall be a quorum.

ART. XI. The Managers shall have the power of appointing such persons as may have rendered essential services to the Society, either members for life, or directors for life.

ART. XII. At the meetings of the Society, and of the Board of Managers, the President, or, in his absence, the Vice President first upon the list then present, and in the absence of all the Vice Presidents, the Treasurer, and in his absence, such member as shall be chosen for that purpose, shall preside.

ART. XIII. The annual meeting of the Society shall be held at New-York, on Thursday after the last Wednesday in April in each year, or at any other time or place, at the option of the Society; when the accounts of the Treasurer shall be presented, and a President, Vice Presidents, Secretaries, Treasurer, and a Board of Managers, shall be chosen for the ensuing year.

ART. XIV. The President shall, at the written request of six members of the Board, call special meetings of the Board of Managers, causing at least three days' notice of such meetings.

ART. XV. The whole of the minutes of every meeting shall be signed by the Chairman and Secretary.

ART. XVI. No alteration shall be made in this Constitution, except by the vote of two thirds of the members of the Society present at an annual meeting."

The subjoined circular, published by a Committee of the Convention, belongs to the history of its proceedings:

*To the Baptist Churches throughout the United States:*

DEAR BRETHREN,—At the recent Bible Convention assembled in this city, churches, associations, conventions and societies of the Baptist denomination, from twenty-three of the United States, and the District of Columbia, were represented by an aggregate amount of numbers and intelligence, unequalled, probably, in the past history of our advancement. After much prayerful deliberation, a very gratifying degree of unanimity was manifest, in reference to the importance of a distinct Bible organization, to furnish the requisite means for distributing faithful translations of God's word in foreign languages.

As a matter of *compromise*, it was unanimously agreed, to confine the operations of the Society, which has been organized by the Convention, *during the ensuing year*, to the circulation of the sacred Scriptures in foreign tongues; and, in the mean time, to solicit the denomination, throughout our land, to send up to the first annual meeting of the Society in New-York, the last week in April, 1838, their views as to the duty of the Society to engage in home distribution, after that period. The following are the resolutions passed by the Convention on this subject:

*Resolved*, That, under existing circumstances, it is the indispensable duty of the Baptist denomination in the United States to organize a distinct Society, for the purpose of aiding in the translation, printing and circulation, of the sacred Scriptures.

*Resolved*, That this organization be known by the name of the American and Foreign Bible Society.

*Resolved*, That the Society confine its efforts, during the ensuing year, to the circulation of the Word of God in foreign tongues.

*Resolved*, That the Baptist denomination in the United States be affectionately requested to send to the Society, at its annual meeting, during the last week in April, 1838, their views as to the duty of the Society to engage in the work of home distribution.

*Resolved*, That a committee of twenty-four members, one from each State, be appointed to draft a constitution, and nominate a Board of officers for the ensuing year.



In accordance with the last of these resolutions, a constitution has been adopted, and the officers of the Society for the ensuing year have been appointed. The seat of its operations is fixed in the city of New-York; and the undersigned, in obedience to the direction of the Convention, beg leave, with respectful earnestness, to call the early, enlightened, and candid attention of all the Baptist churches in our country, to the question submitted to their decision in the fourth resolution.

Without attempting to enumerate the reasons which require to be taken into account, in forming an accurate judgment, we may here be permitted to remark, that sufficient time and opportunity will be allowed to all our churches, to form and express such a decision as they think most in accordance with facts and duty,—best adapted to honor God, and bless a ruined world. That you may be guided aright in this important question, and especially that you may not fail to send your views as above requested, either by delegates or by letter [addressed to the Corresponding Secretary of the American and Foreign Bible Society, N. Y.], was the earnest desire of the Convention, by whose order and in whose behalf we beg leave affectionately to salute you, as

Your brethren in Christ Jesus.

RUFUS BABCOCK, Jr., *President.*

BARON STOW, } *Secretaries of the*  
ADIEL SHERWOOD, } *Convention.*

*Philadelphia, May 1, 1837.*

On the question, whether the Society shall be restricted to foreign lands, or shall embrace both foreign and domestic distribution, different opinions exist. Weighty arguments have been offered on both sides, with an equally sincere desire to serve, in the highest possible degree, the cause of truth and holiness. We will give a condensed statement of these arguments, so far as we have heard them.

It is said, by those who are in favor of leaving the Society unrestricted, that we ought not to exclude our own country from the range of its influence; that we ought to leave ourselves at liberty to circulate the English Scriptures among our own countrymen, if circumstances shall render it expedient; that, being under no obligation to impose on ourselves any restrictions, it is unwise for the denomination to manacle itself; and that, as the field for Christian benevolence is the world, our plans ought to embrace the entire human family. It is stated, that the confidence of a large portion of our brethren in the American Bible Society has been so far weakened, that they will not coöperate with it, even for home distribution; and that they wish for an organization, through which they may not only aid in supporting faithful translations of the Scriptures abroad, but may assist in supplying our own destitute countrymen with Bibles. These brethren allege, that they cannot conscientiously contribute money to the funds of the American Bible Society, because they would thus, in effect, if not directly, aid the Society in executing its resolutions, which contain, as they believe, a wrong and dangerous principle. To limit our Society to the foreign field would virtually exclude many of our churches from the privilege of joining in home distribution. Opulent Baptists, like Withington and Marsh, who may wish to give or bequeath large sums for the distribution of the English Scriptures, would prefer to commit the trust to our own Society. It is contended, that a large number of our brethren, who have never joined in any benevolent efforts, would be drawn into action, by the agency of our Society. Why, then, it is inquired, deprive the Society of the sympathy and support of a great portion of the denomination? Why cut its sinews, and leave it weak and inefficient? Why rob it of its power to accomplish its main design,—the translation, printing and distribution of the Scriptures in foreign languages,—

by making it an exile from our own land? It is objected, moreover, that it would be an embarrassment to the auxiliary societies, to have a separation between the home and foreign distribution. These societies wish for Bibles to supply their own neighborhoods and their own Sabbath schools. It would be inconvenient, even if there were a cordial willingness, to send a part of their funds to the American Bible Society, to purchase copies of the English Scriptures, and the remaining part to the American and Foreign Bible Society, to be expended in foreign distribution. Another argument is, that there would be a needless multiplication of agents, and a liability to undesirable collisions and maneuvering. If our Society shall exclude itself from the domestic field, the American Bible Society will, of course, feel itself at liberty to send its agents among our churches, to solicit funds for domestic distribution. Our own Society will depute its agents to obtain donations for the support of foreign versions. Here, then, will be a double set of agents traversing the same field, and pleading, substantially, the same cause.

It is, on the other hand, argued, that the providence of God has not clearly made it our duty to separate ourselves from the American Bible Society, except in relation to foreign translations. We have cordially coöperated with the Society for twenty years, in distributing the English Scriptures; a labor which we still approve, and in which we intend, in some way, still to participate. It is maintained, that, as the American Bible Society is able and willing to supply our country with the English Scriptures, it is not only unnecessary, but it would be a waste of our strength, to form an organization to perform the same work. It is affirmed, that we need large sums for our foreign and domestic missions, for our education societies, for our literary institutions, and for various other operations; and that we cannot spare funds to be employed in defraying the needless expense of engaging in domestic distribution. This expense would be great. A large stock of Bibles must be printed or purchased. Depositories in New-York and elsewhere must be opened. Secretaries, clerks and agents must be employed, and liberally paid. There is, moreover, a distressing want of suitable men, in all departments of our religious and benevolent operations. Why, then, without necessity, increase the demand? It is urged, that a total separation from the American Bible Society would have the aspect of sectarian resentment; and that the Baptists ought not to aid in breaking the golden cord which has hitherto bound Christians together in a holy alliance for distributing the documents of their common faith. It is understood, that our English brethren, though they have presented a dignified protest, signed by five hundred and forty-four Baptist ministers, against the decision of the British and Foreign Bible Society, in relation to Baptist versions of the Scriptures, do not intend to abandon the Society.\* It is, in fine, maintained, that a regard to the union of our churches ought to plead for the restriction, because all are willing to sustain a society for foreign distribution, while many cannot feel it to be right to support it, if it shall also undertake the unnecessary office of distributing the English Scriptures.

These are, in substance, the main arguments which we have heard, on both sides. We frankly avow, that we should prefer to restrict the Society to foreign translations. This preference rests on the abstract merits of the question,—on considerations of general expediency. These considerations, however, would be greatly modified, if it should become certain, that a large majority of our brethren held different views. A measure which might not be wise in itself might become expedient, if it could avert the greater evil of discord among ourselves. There is neither wisdom nor piety in a pertinacious

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\* At the last anniversary, the Rev. Dr. Cox, while he expressed publicly his disapprobation of the decision referred to, made an eloquent speech in favor of union.

adherence to a man's own opinions, on questions of expediency. We are fully aware, that many of our brethren are opposed to restriction. Let each enjoy the right of forming his own opinions, and yield the same right to others. All must admit, that there is much weight in the arguments which are urged on both sides. We pray our brethren not to allow any party feelings to sway them. Let us be true to the fundamental principle of our church polity, that, while we are independent, the majority, on questions of expediency, ought to govern. If, then, it shall prove to be the fact, that a large majority of our churches are in favor of an unrestricted society, why should not the minority cheerfully acquiesce? Why should there be any division among us on this point? No man will be bound to support the Society, unless he shall please to do so. No man will need to withdraw his aid from the American Bible Society, unless he shall think it his duty. We can, really, see no cause for any collision; and we hope and believe, that there will be none. Let all the churches and other bodies, which may think proper to express any opinion on the subject, do so with frankness and affection; and then let them yield to the wishes of the majority. That the Baptists have a *right* to form a separate society, for both domestic and foreign distribution, cannot, we suppose, be disputed, whatever may be thought of its expediency. The Baptists, as a body, have never pledged themselves to the American Bible Society. Thousands of our brethren have never had any connection with it. We violate no obligation, then, by forming a society of our own. If individuals feel their consciences bound, they, of course, will retain their connection with the American Bible Society; but let them allow an equal liberty to those who, whether wisely or not, feel it to be their duty to form a separate society. The Friends have a Bible Society of their own; so have the Episcopalians; so, until recently, had the Methodists; so will the old-school Presbyterians, if they shall carry out the policy which they have begun. Why, then, should the Baptists be stigmatized, if they should think proper to form an organization for directing their own resources, in promoting the common cause?

We make these suggestions, from a sincere desire to act the part of a peacemaker. It is very desirable, that, if we are to have a society, it should be vigorously sustained. In all our measures, union is needful to the highest success. A want of union in any one of our enterprises will soon extend itself to the rest. Each will have its supporters, who will be liable to become opposers of any other, which may seem to be in the way of their favorite project. It has already been predicted, by other denominations, that the Bible question will divide the Baptists. We do not believe it. We see no evidence, that any of our brethren are disposed to fan the embers of discord. We have heard, indeed, with regret, the term, "New-England party," applied to those who were disinclined to form any new organization, and who now wish the Society to be restricted. We deny, positively, that there is any such party. It is probably true, that a majority of the brethren in New-England hold these views. But many of them do not; and, in fact, there has been a much more decided expression of opinion out of New-England than here, in favor of restricting the Society.\* The New-England brethren are wont to act with great independence, and to examine a question coolly in all its bearings; but the genuine republican and Baptist principle of yielding to the majority is no where more firmly rooted than in the soil of New-England. We will

\* No public body in New-England, within our knowledge, has, at the time of writing this note, declared its opinion, except the Ashford (Ct.) Association, which *opposed* the restriction. The State Convention of Ohio, a public meeting in Missouri, and the Edwardsville Association in Illinois, have expressed their desire, that the Society be restricted to the foreign field. The State Convention of South Carolina was so decidedly opposed to any new organization, that it refused to appoint delegates to the Philadelphia Convention.

answer for our brethren here, that, whatever may be the decision respecting the operations of the Society, there will be no party, on either side, east of the Hudson. We trust, that there will be none any where; but that all will hold the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace, coöperating with their brethren so far as they can, and quietly standing out of the way, if others choose to go farther.

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NEW ENGLISH VERSION OF THE SCRIPTURES.

An erroneous impression has been made, to a considerable extent, that the Baptists intend to publish a new English version of the Bible. It has been stated, we understand, in some quarters, that the late Bible Convention was convened for this purpose, and that this is one of the main objects of the new Bible Society. We wish to correct this mistake. Some individuals are in favor of such a project; but they are few in number. At the Convention, the subject did not come directly under discussion; but a proposal to issue a new version would have received, in that body, very few votes. A motion was made to remove all suspicions, by resolving, that all copies of the English Scriptures, to be issued by the new Society, should be of the received version. This motion was withdrawn, because, the Society being restricted, for the present year, to foreign versions, such a motion was unnecessary. If the Society shall resolve to engage in domestic distribution, it will, we hope, introduce into its constitution the provision contemplated by that motion. It would strengthen the Society, by allaying fears on this subject, and silencing at once injurious imputations.

Some color has probably been given to the reports alluded to, by a project, now in progress, to republish the New Testament, with no other alteration than the substitution of the words *immerse* and *immersion*, for *baptize* and *baptism*. This plan is not, we think, a wise one; but it is wholly an individual enterprise, for which the Baptists are no more responsible than the Congregationalists are for Dr. Webster's revised edition. Any individual has, of course, a right to publish an edition of the Scriptures, with such amendments as he may fancy himself qualified to make; and he may sell his book, if he can find purchasers. But the denomination to which he belongs is not implicated in his project. Let us keep public and individual responsibility entirely separate.

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AMERICAN AND FOREIGN BIBLE SOCIETY.

We have received the "Report of the Board of Managers of the American and Foreign Bible Society, embracing the period of its provisional organization." This interesting document contains a history of the measures which led to the formation of the Society. It relates a number of facts respecting the character of several versions, which have received aid from the American Bible Society, and from the British and Foreign Bible Society. It is clearly proved, that some of these versions contain palpable errors and offensive blemishes, which these Societies appear to consider as of little importance, compared with the enormous heresy of translating the word *baptize*.

The Board of the American and Foreign Bible Society employed several agents during the year, who visited associations, churches, and other religious bodies, chiefly in New-York and the Western States. The sum of \$21,042 58 was received, besides a considerable amount which has been subscribed, but not yet paid. The appropriations during the year were, \$10,000 to the Baptist Board of Foreign Missions, for the printing and circulation of versions made by their missionaries; and \$5000 to aid our English brethren in printing the Scriptures in Bengalee. A considerable number of auxiliary societies



were formed, and a long list of life-directors and life-members is given in the Report. An extensive correspondence has been opened, and some valuable communications have been received, and printed in the Appendix. The Report closes with a survey of the wide field, and of the incitements to diligent and persevering toil.

The Society held its annual meeting in Philadelphia, April 26, 1837. Its proceedings were not laid before the Bible Convention; but after that body had adjourned, the Society held a meeting, at which it resolved to merge itself in the new Society which the Convention had formed, and to which all its funds, auxiliaries, life-directors and life-members were transferred.

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AMERICAN BAPTIST HOME MISSION SOCIETY.

The annual meeting was held in Philadelphia, April 27. The Society employed, the last year, in twelve States and Territories, and two British provinces, one hundred and twenty-nine missionaries and agents, whose aggregate amount of labor was eighty-nine years, in connection with two hundred and forty-seven churches and congregations. The number added to these churches through their labors, so far as had been ascertained, was thirteen hundred and thirty-two, eight hundred and seventy-three of which were by baptism. The missionaries assisted in the ordination of twenty-seven ministers, and in the constitution of thirty-three churches. The receipts, during the year, including a small balance, were \$13,680 40, and the expenditures for the same period, \$13,556 04.

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NORTHERN BAPTIST EDUCATION SOCIETY.

The anniversary was held in Boston, May 31. The number of students received during the year was twenty-seven; dismissed, fourteen; present number aided by the parent Society, one hundred and sixteen. The branches of the Society aid seventy young men, viz., Maine, sixteen; New-Hampshire, sixteen; Vermont, nineteen; Connecticut, eleven; and Rhode-Island, eight. Total number aided by the Society and its branches, one hundred and eighty-six. Of these, thirty-six are in theological institutions, seventy-seven are in college, and seventy-seven in various stages of preparatory studies. Of the students in the theological institutions and colleges, about one fourth intend to become missionaries. The whole amount received by the parent Society, during the year, was \$5686 21, expended, \$6705 22; leaving the treasury in debt, \$1019 01.

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AMERICAN SUNDAY SCHOOL UNION.

The anniversary was held in Philadelphia, May 23. The number of new books issued during the year was thirty-three, making an aggregate of three thousand five hundred and four pages of new publications. The number of volumes printed during the year was eight hundred and ninety thousand six hundred and sixty-two. The amount received during the year, by donations, was \$34,035 54; sales of books, \$39,268 04; total, \$73,303 58.

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AMERICAN TRACT SOCIETY.

The twelfth anniversary was held in New-York, May 10. Receipts during the year, \$130,991 28, being \$25,000 more than the preceding year. Forty-three new publications have been issued during the year, making the whole number on the Society's list of publications eight hundred and sixty-nine. In addition to these, thirty-six publications have been adopted for foreign lands,

making the whole number to which the Society's funds may be applied abroad, four hundred and forty-six, of which thirty-six are volumes; besides numerous portions of Scripture in various forms,—the missionaries and institutions aided by the Society issuing tracts in *fifty-six* different languages. Printed during the year, 5,069,000 publications, making 125,682,000 pages. Printed since the Society was formed, 48,716,590 publications, making 837,535,744 pages. New auxiliaries, 25; whole number, 1116.

#### QUARTERLY LIST.

##### DEATHS.

JOSEPH KNIGHTEN, pastor of the Mount Pisgah, Flat Rock and Bethany churches, S. C., April 27.  
DAN MARTIN, in Parish, Oswego county, N. Y., March 29.  
HORACE GRISWOLD, in Brooklyn, Michigan, May 5, aged 50.  
WILLIAM WARREN, in Marblatown, Ulster county, N. Y., Dec. 6, aged 77.  
RUFUS CHANDLER, at Little Yale, Caroline county, Va., July 8, aged 53.  
ISAAC BRIGGS, at Athol, Mass., July 12, aged 75.

##### ORDINATIONS.

JOHN SMITH, in Alabama, February 5.  
OBED SPERRY, in Troy, N. H., May 4.  
MICHAEL COLBY, in Bennington, Genesee county, N. Y., Feb. 22.  
GEORGE N. WAITT, in Sharon, Mass., May 30.  
ZEBDIAL BRADFORD, in North Yarmouth, Me.  
EDWARD A. STEVENS, at Ruckersville, Ga., May 7, as a missionary to Burmah.  
MEAD BAILEY, in Middlebury, Genesee co., N. Y.  
ALPHEUS W. BAKER, in Elba, Genesee co., N. Y., May 3.  
EDWIN T. JACOBS, in Oxford, N. Y., May 3.  
DANIEL GOWE, in Nassau, Rensselaer county, N. Y., April 19.  
JOHN DAVIDSON, in Monongalia county, Va., April 30.  
WILLIAM LAMSON, in Gloucester Harbor, Mass., June 7.  
J. W. OLMSTEAD, at Little Falls, N. Y., June 7.  
LYMAN STETSON, at West Meredith, Delaware county, N. Y.  
ASA W. BUTTON, at Oakland, N. Y., April 26.  
AMAZIAH RICE, at Neal's Creek Church, S. C., May 27.  
ALEXANDER MILNE, at Tiverton, R. I., May 31.  
HENRY SMITH, at Reading, West Parish, Mass., June 2.  
OLIVER AYRE, at Littleton, Mass., June 14.  
HIRAM A. GRAVES, at Springfield, Mass., June 20.  
NEVILLE M. LUMPKIN, at Somerville, Tenn.

BENJAMIN CONGDON, in Sanbornton, East Parish, N. H., May 30.  
ALFRED HARVEY, at Campton, N. H., June 7.  
JOHN CLAPP, at Gardner, Mass., June 28.  
WILLIAM BROWN, at Tolland, Ct., July 5.  
S. M. RICE, at Adrian, Michigan, June 8.  
GEORGE PENNEL, at Wall Lake, N. Y.  
BENJAMIN REESE, at Mount Pleasant, Ia., July 12.  
D. P. SMITH, in Tully, Onondaga county, N. Y., July 11.  
A. L. MASON, at Mason Village, N. H., June 20.

##### CONSTITUTION OF CHURCHES.

###### BAPTIST CHURCHES WERE CONSTITUTED

At Fort Wayne, Ia., in April.  
At Wilshire, Ohio, in April.  
At Perry, Pike county, Ill., Feb. 25.  
In Tyler county, Va.  
In Paddock's Prairie, Madison county, Ill., May 6.  
In Neponset Village, Mass., June 7.  
At Moorestown, N. J., June 6.  
At West Avon, Livingston county, N. Y., May 24.  
In Prince William county, Va., April 25.  
Near Carrolton, Ala., March 11.  
At Lamprey River Village, New-Market, N. H., May 25.  
At Middletown, Carroll county, Mississippi, April 15.  
At North Orange, N. J., June 14.  
At Leominster, Mass., June 28.  
At Hollis, N. H., June 6.  
At Unadilla, Livingston county, Michigan, April 19.  
At East Ingham, Ingham county, Michigan, May 24.  
At Ohio City, Ohio, June 22.  
At Hartland, Michigan, April 26.  
At Conquest, N. Y., June 27.

##### DEDICATIONS.

###### BAPTIST MEETING-HOUSES WERE DEDICATED

At Canton, Mass., June 13.  
At Lower Alton, Ill., June 18.  
At Brooksville, Me., June 29.  
At Worcester, Mass., July 27.